“DEFENDANT VETO” OR “TOTALITY OF THE CIRCUMSTANCES”? IT’S TIME FOR THE SUPREME COURT TO STRAIGHTEN OUT THE PERSONAL JURISDICTION STANDARD ONCE AGAIN

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I. INTRODUCTION

Commentators frequently claim that there is no single, coherent doctrine of extra-territorial personal jurisdiction,¹ and unfortunately, they are correct. International Shoe Co. v. Washington,² commonly (but inaccurately) thought of as the wellspring of the modern form of the doctrine, announced a relatively straightforward, two-factor, four-permutation test that worked well for resolving most cases.³ In the nearly sixty-year period following International Shoe, however, as the Supreme Court expanded and refined the standard, what was once straightforward and uncomplicated became convoluted and arcane. Two general, and generally incompatible, versions of the doctrine competed for dominance. The first, what might best be described as a “totality-of-the-circumstances”⁴ view, is essentially a balancing test which weighs the convenience interests of litigants against the sovereignty interests of State and Federal Governments to situate litigation wherever those collective interests are reasonably accommodated. The second, perhaps

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2. 326 U.S. 310 (1945).
3. Id. at 316-19.
4. The expression comes from Justice Scalia’s opinion for the Court in Burnham v. Superior Court, 495 U.S. 604, 604-26 (1990) (plurality opinion) ("Justice Brennan’s approach does not establish a rule of law at all, but only a ‘totality of the circumstances’ test, guaranteeing what traditional territorial rules of jurisdiction were designed precisely to avoid: uncertainty and litigation over the preliminary issue of the forum’s competence."). For an example of lower court usage, see Mulcahy v. Cheetah Learning LLC, Civ. File No. CIV.02-791 (PAM/RLE), 2002 U.S. Dist. LEXIS 17516, at *6-7 (D. Minn. Sept. 4, 2002) ("In determining whether a defendant’s contacts are sufficient for an exercise of personal jurisdiction, a court must consider all of those contacts with the forum in the aggregate and examine the totality of the circumstances.").
best described as a “defendant-veto” view, is a kind of “single-factor” test that permits defendants to escape the extra-territorial reach of a state’s personal jurisdictional power by avoiding certain kinds of purposeful contacts with the state. There is some overlap between these two versions of the doctrine, of course, but also a considerable area of difference, and the two views dictate opposite conclusions when the forum a defendant has studiously tried to avoid is a (or even “the most”) convenient forum.

In the decade or so following International Shoe, the competition between the two views remained in relative equilibrium, with neither view gaining a clear upper hand. At the end of that period, in the bookend cases of Hanson v. Denckla and McGee v. International Life Insurance Co., the Supreme Court reached opposite results, relying on the defendant-veto view in Hanson and the totality-of-the-circumstances view in McGee, when the reverse seemed to make more sense. It was as if, after ten years of thinking about it, the Court was no clearer on what form the doctrine should take than it was when it started. The doctrine then sat nearly dormant for about twenty years, during which time the Court made few systematic attempts to restate or reformulate it. It was not until the early 1980s, in a spate of now well-known cases (Kulko v. Superior Court, Worldwide Volkswagen Corp. v. Woodson, Insurance Corp. of Ireland v. Compagnie des Bauxites de Guinee, Helicopteros Nacionales de Colombia, S. A. v. Hall, Keeton v. Hustler Magazine, Inc., Calder v. Jones, Burger King Corp. v. Rudzewicz, and Asahi Metal Industry Co. v. Superior Court, among others), that the Court got back into the field, mostly to reinforce the defendant-veto view which had been losing ground in the lower federal and state courts. In this

5. The expression comes from Justice Brennan’s dissent in World-Wide Volkswagen Corp. v. Woodson, 444 U.S. 286, 312 (1980) (Brennan, J., dissenting) (“I would also, however, strip the defendant of an unjustified veto power over certain very appropriate fora—a power the defendant justifiably enjoyed long ago when communication and travel over long distances were slow and unpredictable and when notions of state sovereignty were impractical and exaggerated.”).
8. Hanson, 357 U.S. at 251; McGee, 355 U.S. at 222.
important series of cases the Court added considerable sophistication to the doctrine, but introduced a number of confusing elements as well. The confusion was caused principally by the Court's unfortunate propensity to use key concepts to mean more than one thing, to change doctrinal terminology without indicating that it was doing so, to use more than one term to express the same idea, to fail to ground the doctrine adequately in the Constitution (causing many to question its legitimacy), and to mix and match substantive law and jurisdictional concerns in developing doctrinal principles, all the while professing that it was not doing any of these.

Lower federal and state courts were confused by all of this, of course, and began to add confusions of their own, relying sometimes on one part of the Supreme Court's thinking and at other times on other parts. Many courts, for example, all but eliminated the category of general jurisdiction,¹⁷ at least as originally understood and articulated in International Shoe,¹⁸ by making its requirements either identical to, or less demanding than, those required for what was intended to be the easier-to-satisfy category of specific jurisdiction.¹⁹ Courts also ignored the distinction between contacts and fairness considerations in the specific jurisdiction standard, and began to treat both types of factors as free-standing jurisdictional tests in their own right. While other courts defined the nexus requirement of specific jurisdiction to include almost any kind of relationship between the defendant's forum contacts and the plaintiff's claim, all but eliminating the defendant's veto right in many instances. These and equivalent doctrinal frolics-and-detours have caused serious problems for litigants, lawyers, and judges, of course, who want to know where suits may be brought and where they will have to defend. The problem is especially serious in periods when the Supreme Court is not taking personal jurisdiction cases, since there is little prospect of reversing erroneous lower court decisions. The lack of a clear standard also exacerbates the pressure on litigants to forum-shop, and forum-shopping, in turn, reinforces the familiar “rule-of-law” criticism of the American judicial system, that its decisions frequently lack legitimacy because they are based more on home court prejudice than on substantive entitlement.

¹⁷. See, e.g., Helicopteros, 466 U.S. at 414 n.9 (defining general jurisdiction).
¹⁹. Helicopteros, 466 U.S. at 414 n.8 (defining specific jurisdiction). The terms “general” and “specific” jurisdiction were academic rather than judicial inventions, see generally Arthur T. von Mehren & Donald T. Trautman, Jurisdiction to Adjudicate: A Suggested Analysis, 79 Harv. L. Rev. 1121, 1136-63 (1966), but have since been adopted by the Supreme Court, e.g., Helicopteros, 466 U.S. at 414 nn.8-9.
It may be that the Supreme Court is about to get back into the personal jurisdiction business, however, in part to clear up the difficulties described above, and in part to resolve new kinds of problems raised by cases in which the defendant’s forum contacts are made over the Internet. The roughly twenty year dormancy period in which the Court, historically, has not taken personal jurisdiction cases is coming to an end, for one thing, and many of the Internet-contacts cases that have now begun to proliferate present interesting questions not easily resolved by existing doctrinal formulations. Early Internet (mostly commercial dealing) cases were not all that different from the telephone contacts and stream-of-commerce pollution contacts cases that were commonplace in the International Shoe era, but the newest set of cases, principally those involving libel and intellectual property claims, present questions not easily answered by International Shoe-based formulations of the standard, and they have produced a wide variety of not always consistent or satisfactory responses in the lower federal and state courts. In this Article, I hope to sort out some of these confusions, and offer suggestions for how the Court, using the Internet cases, might get the personal jurisdictional doctrine back on track.

II. The Core Constitutional Standard: International Shoe to Woodson to Burger King

A) The Beginning: International Shoe

While Pennoyer v. Neff still does some things better, the Supreme Court’s decision in International Shoe is generally regarded as the origin of the modern personal jurisdiction doctrine, and its well-known capias ad respondendum language self-consciously seems to say as much.

20. See, e.g., Nat’l Egg Co. v. Bank Leumi Le-Israel N.M., 504 F. Supp. 305, 309 (N.D. Ga. 1980) (finding personal jurisdiction over defendant whose only significant contact with the forum state was a single telephone call).

21. The doctrine of “general jurisdiction” is as confused as a doctrine can be and still be said to be a doctrine. See discussion infra notes 296-347, 474-79 and accompanying text.

22. 95 U.S. 714 (1877).

23. For example, Pennoyer does a better job than International Shoe of justifying the consideration of state sovereignty interests in the personal jurisdiction calculation, because it is grounded not only in the Due Process Clause of the Constitution, but also on principles of international (or what the Court called “public”) law. Id. at 722-23. The Due Process Clause protects only the interests of persons, but public (or international) law protects sovereignty interests as well. Id. at 722-23, 732-33.

24. Int’l Shoe, 326 U.S. at 316. The language reads now that the capias ad respondendum has given way to personal service of summons or other form of notice, due process requires only that in order to subject a defendant to a judgment in personam, if he be not present within the territory of the forum, he have certain minimum contacts with it such that the
Perhaps because it saw itself as starting over from the beginning and thus able to write on a clean slate, the Court in International Shoe took the doctrine down to bedrock. It suggested (and later would say directly), that the Due Process Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment to the Constitution is the sole limitation on a state’s power to subject an out-of-state defendant to the personal jurisdiction of its courts. Due Process, the Court explained, requires that a defendant “not present within the territory of the forum . . . have certain minimum contacts with [the forum] such that the maintenance of the suit does not offend ‘traditional notions of fair play and substantial justice.’” The demands of fair play and substantial justice are met when a defendant’s contacts are such that it is “reasonable, in the context of our federal system of government,” to require the defendant to defend in that forum. “An ‘estimate of the inconveniences’” to the defendant “is relevant in this connection.” This is the famous “minimum contacts” standard.

25. Ins. Corp. of I.r. v. Compagnie des Bauxite de Guinee, 456 U.S. at 694, 703 n.10 (1982) (“[The Due Process] Clause is the only source of the personal jurisdiction requirement . . . .”). This will create difficulties later on when the Court is called upon to justify the consideration of sovereignty concerns in its jurisdictional analysis, since the Due Process Clause protects only the interests of persons and not those of states. See infra notes 223-29 and accompanying text.

26. Int’l Shoe, 326 U.S. at 316 (quoting Milliken v. Meyer, 311 U.S. 457, 463 (1940)). The “minimum contacts” standard has both a notice and a power dimension. A defendant cannot be subjected to jurisdiction in a forum without reasonable notice that the action has been brought, Mullane v. Cent. Hanover Bank & Trust Co., 339 U.S. 306, 313-14 (1950), and sufficient contacts with the forum to make it reasonable for the forum to assert power over the defendant, Int’l Shoe, 326 U.S. at 316. International Shoe, along with most of the other jurisdictional decisions in the history of the Court, is concerned principally with the power dimension of the doctrine, and I will limit discussion in this Article to that aspect as well.

27. Int’l Shoe, 326 U.S. at 317.

28. Id. (quoting Hutchinson v. Chase & Gilbert, Inc., 45 F.2d 139 (2d Cir. 1930)).

29. Another way to think of the relationships among the various concepts and terms is this: due process equals fair play and substantial justice; fair play and substantial justice equals reasonableness; reasonableness equals minimum contacts; and minimum contacts equals everything that is to follow (in effect, defendant purposeful contacts weighed against federal and state sovereignty interests). Each of the terms is a synonym for each of the other terms at a different level of abstraction.
At this level of abstraction, the concept of “minimum contacts”\(^{30}\) is hard to use, so the Court translated this synonym for constitutionally sufficient contacts into more operational language, in the form of a two-factor (contacts and nexus), four-permutation test. A defendant’s contacts with a state are sufficient to support jurisdiction when they are either (1) “continuous and systematic” and “give rise to the liabilities sued on,”\(^{31}\) or (2) “so substantial and of such a nature as to justify suit . . . on causes of action arising from dealings entirely distinct from those [contacts].”\(^{32}\) On the other hand, (3) “single or occasional acts” (as well as those that are continuous and systematic but not substantial) that are unconnected to the plaintiff’s cause of action are not sufficient to confer jurisdiction,\(^{33}\) unless (4) the “nature and quality and the circumstances of their commission” make it fair to render an out-of-state defendant amenable to suit.\(^{34}\) The first and fourth of these categories came to be called the doctrine of specific jurisdiction, and the second the doctrine of general jurisdiction, in the now generally accepted terminology of von Mehren and Trautman.\(^{35}\) The third category remains one in which jurisdiction does not exist.\(^{36}\)

International Shoe’s four-part schemata handled most jurisdictional problems pretty well, and if the Court had continued to work with it, tweaking and refining it when necessary, perhaps the history of the personal jurisdiction doctrine would have been different; but this did not happen. Some of the Court’s language needed immediate elaboration, of course. For example, it was not clear what it meant for a defendant’s connections with a forum to “give rise to” a plaintiff’s cause of action (the issue was complicated further when the Court, in the next breath, seemed to use the less restrictive expression “connected with” as a

\(^{30}\) While it is the principal standard by which long-arm jurisdiction is judged, “minimum contacts” is not the only personal jurisdiction standard. There also are so-called single-factor tests that support jurisdiction in certain instances and excuse a plaintiff from having to show that a defendant has “minimum contacts” with a state. Service of process within a state (so-called transient or tag jurisdiction) is one, see Burnham v. Superior Court, 495 U.S. 604, 612-16 (1990) (plurality opinion), and domicile is another, see Meyer, 311 U.S. at 463. Certain kinds of “status” determinations (e.g., custody, divorce, guardianship) also can be adjudicated by states responsible for creating the status in the first instance, even if the parties no longer have any contacts with the state. See Shaffer v. Heitner, 433 U.S. 186, 201 (1977). I will limit discussion in this Article to “minimum contacts” types of jurisdictional problems, and will not take up questions involving such single-factor tests.

\(^{31}\) Int’l Shoe, 326 U.S. at 317.

\(^{32}\) Id. at 318.

\(^{33}\) Id.

\(^{34}\) Id.

\(^{35}\) See von Mehren & Trautman, supra note 19, at 1136, 1143-45, 1147.

\(^{36}\) Int’l Shoe, 326 U.S. at 318.
Did this “nexus” requirement, as it came
to be called, envision a “but for” or “proximate cause” relationship
between a defendant’s activities in the forum and the plaintiff’s claim?38
Did there have to be an overlap, in other words, between the facts
needed to prove the defendant’s contacts and the facts needed to prove
the plaintiff’s claim, or was it enough that the two sets of facts dealt with
the same general subject matter? In addition, the Court needed to
explain in greater detail the difference between “continuous and
systematic” contacts, which were enough to establish specific jurisdiction,
and “substantial” contacts which were needed to establish general
jurisdiction. Were substantial contacts just more numerous than
continuous and systematic ones, or were they of a different kind
altogether? The confusion over the differences between these two
concepts would grow exponentially over the years, and prove to be one
of the most intractable problems with the doctrine.39

It also was not clear what the Court meant by its “nature and quality
and . . . circumstances” qualification on the category of single and
isolated contacts giving rise to the claim. Was this where the “estimate of
inconveniences” to the defendant made its way into the analysis, or was it
about something else altogether? And finally, where in this four-part

37. Id. at 317. See Helicopteros Nacionales de Colombia, S. A. v. Hall, 466 U.S. 408,
425-28 (1984) (Brennan, J., dissenting), for an illustration of the problems this alternative
phrasing created. Professor Brilmayer’s discussion of what it means to give rise to a claim
is still the best one available. See Lea Brilmayer et al., A General Look at General
Lea Brilmayer, How Contacts Count: Due Process Limitations on State Court Jurisdiction,
1980 SUP. CT. REv. 77, 80-88 [hereinafter Brilmayer, How Contacts Count]. For more
confused discussions, see Sarah R. Cebik, “A Riddle Wrapped in a Mystery Inside an
Enigma”: General Personal Jurisdiction and Notions of Sovereignty, 1998 ANN. SURV. A M.
L. 1, 6-7, 19-21, 27-28 (1998), and Twitchell, supra note 1.

2002) (describing the different nexus tests employed by different circuits); Metro-
2003) (describing how the Ninth Circuit’s “but for” test for nexus is broader than those
adopted by other circuits, and how the test “must have some degree of proximate
causation to be considered for purposes of jurisdiction”); Rodriguez Salgado v. Les
requirement in terms of proximate cause); Pearl Invs., LLC v. Standard I/O, Inc., 224 F.
Supp. 2d 277, 282-83 (D. Me. 2002) (discussing the distinction in terms of “cause in fact”
and “legal cause”); EMI Music Mexico, S.A. de C.V. v. Rodriguez, 97 S.W.3d 847, 859
(Tex. App. 2003) (“Some courts require that conduct within the state must be a
proximate cause for the plaintiff’s injury, while others hold it sufficient if the conduct
within the state is a ‘but for’ cause of the plaintiff’s injury.” (citing Chew v. Dietrich, 143
F.3d 24, 29 (2d Cir. 1998))).

39. B. Glenn George, In Search of General Jurisdiction, 64 TUL. L. REv. 1097, 1111

40. Int’l Shoe, 326 U.S. at 318.
schemata did the concerns of “our federal system of government,” the sovereignty interests of the Federal and State Governments caught up in jurisdictional debates, get factored into the equation, and more interestingly, what justified taking such interests into account in the first place? Were they protected by the Due Process Clause, just as a defendant’s liberty and property interests were, notwithstanding that the Due Process Clause refers only to the rights of persons and not states, or did some other source of law justify their consideration?

It was not only what the Court in *International Shoe* left unsaid, but what it said explicitly as well, that created confusion for lower court judges and lawyers. For example, the assertion that the adequacy of a defendant’s contacts to support jurisdiction “cannot be simply [a] mechanical or quantitative” matter, one of just “a little more or a little less,”41 suggested that some sort of qualitative judgment was involved in personal jurisdiction analysis, but what form that judgment should take was left up in the air. Equally murky was the Court’s indication that the “extent [to which a defendant] exercises the privilege of conducting activities within a state” is relevant to determining amenability to suit.42 This seemed to make the defendant’s state of mind a factor in the jurisdictional calculus, but the exact nature of this “purposefulness” requirement, as it has come to be known, was left undefined. Are defendants responsible for all reasonably foreseeable consequences of actions they set in motion, or just consequences they willfully intend and personally direct? This decision (in effect) to exclude random, fortuitous, and inadvertent defendant forum contacts from jurisdictional analysis, as well as contacts produced by the actions of third parties not acting as agents for the defendant, has turned out to be one of the most important features of the “minimum contacts” test, and yet in *International Shoe* there was little if any indication that this would be so. While the Court would struggle with these and other such questions for the next half-century, in a sense none of the questions have been resolved fully, and the absence of adequate answers is one of the principal reasons for the doctrine’s present difficulties.

B) The Specific Jurisdiction Bookends: McGee and Hanson

After *International Shoe*, except for *Perkins v. Benguet Consolidated Mining Co.*43 (still the Court’s only major foray into the realm of general jurisdiction),44 the Court effectively left the “minimum contacts”
standard alone for over a decade.\footnote{It was not until its 1957-1958 Term, in McGee and Hanson, bookend cases that still define the outer limits of specific jurisdiction, that the Court began to develop the standard. For the most part, McGee and Hanson are “purposefulness” cases, Hanson intentionally so and McGee by ratification, but they speak to many other issues as well. In McGee the Court upheld a California state court’s assertion of extra-territorial jurisdiction over a Texas insurer based on the company’s action in sending a reinsurance certificate to McGee, a California policy holder. A part from the reinsurance certificate, which the company sent after it had “assumed [the] insurance obligations” of an Arizona insurer with whom McGee had a policy, the company conducted no business in California. Finding jurisdiction, the Court (through Justice Black) based its unanimous and short opinion on what might best be described as a totality-of-the-circumstances view, and in fact, McGee is the high-water mark for this particular view of long-arm jurisdiction. Heralding a “clearly discernible [trend] toward expanding the permissible scope of state jurisdiction over . . . nonresidents . . . attributable to the fundamental transformation of our national economy over the years,” Justice Black suggested that the major concern in personal jurisdiction analysis should be whether the assertion of jurisdiction would be inconvenient to the parties. Since there was “no contention that [International Life] did not have adequate notice of the suit or sufficient time to prepare its defenses and appear,” inconvenience was not a concern in McGee, and since there was no inconvenience, there was jurisdiction.} McGee’s sweeping language, particularly its statement about the “fundamental transformation of our national economy,” makes it a

\footnote{\begin{itemize}
\item Mulane v. Central Hanover Bank & Trust Co., 339 U.S. 306 (1950), is the lone exception to this, id. at 311-14. Commonly thought of as a “notice” case, Mullane also is one of the few cases to base part of its jurisdictional analysis on substantive law grounds. See discussion infra note 248.
\item McGee v. Int’l Life Ins. Co., 355 U.S. 220, 223-24 (1957). This is not literally correct. McGee was the beneficiary of an insurance policy issued to her son, Lowell Franklin. Id. I describe her as the policy holder to avoid confusion with the case name, and because she functioned in that role in the case. See id. This description of the case, focusing on the Company’s sending of a reissuance certificate to Franklin in California, comes from Hanson, 357 U.S. 235, at 251-52, rather than McGee itself, where the purposefulness of sending the reinsurance certificate was not emphasized. See infra note 73.
\item Id. at 221-22.
\item Id. at 222.
\item Id. at 223-24.
\item Id. at 224.
\item See id. at 223-24.
\item Id. at 222.
\end{itemize}}
favorite of those who think state boundaries should play little or no role in defining the contours of long-arm jurisdiction, but there is little reason to believe that this view is widely held on the Supreme Court, or that McGee itself has played any significant role in the development of the personal jurisdiction doctrine over the years. The case appears to be more of a throw-away opinion than a major doctrinal statement, and one in which the difficult issues we now know divided the Court at the time were temporarily put on hold to await the more controversial context of Hanson, decided six months later. 

Ultimately, McGee is probably best explained as a “sovereignty” or “state interest” case, in which California’s interest in providing a means of redress for its citizens with small claims against out-of-state insurance companies that they would not pursue if they could not sue in California (because it would cost more to litigate than they could win), turned a weak contacts case into one strong enough to support jurisdiction. The Court mentions this reason in its opinion, though it does not emphasize it. While there are those who love it, McGee is not an important personal jurisdiction case, and unless the idea of nationwide service of process comes into widespread favor, it never will be. 

Hanson, on the other hand, is a different story.

53. McGee is a four page, unanimous opinion. Id. at 221-24. Hanson has a twenty-one page majority opinion and another eight pages of Justices Black and Douglas dissents. Hanson v. Denckla, 357 U.S. 235, 238-64 (1958).

54. McGee, 355 U.S. at 223. It also was important that California’s interest was the procedural one of providing a forum for its citizens to litigate rather than the substantive one of establishing terms of fair dealing between California citizens and out of state insurers. Id. at 224. The latter interest is adequately protected by the State’s ability to pass laws regulating the insurance industry, but the former requires the ability to take jurisdictional authority over out of state parties. It also was important that the State had enacted a special jurisdictional statute for claims like McGee’s, thereby acting to assert this procedural interest. Id. at 221, 224.


[T]he best way to stem the flood of litigation over personal jurisdiction is to regard due process as requiring only that the forum have some rational basis for wishing to decide the case . . . .

. . . [W]e will have to reject once and for all the notion that state sovereignty and state lines are important constants in the due process calculus. 

Id. at 545, 548-49. There are limited instances in which nationwide service of process is available. See, e.g., Sec. Investor Prot. Corp. v. Vigman, 764 F.2d 1309, 1315-16 (9th Cir. 1985) (discussing section 27 of the Security Exchange Act, 15 U.S.C. § 78, which provides for nationwide service of process over corporations in antitrust actions in any district “where[] the [corporation] may be found”). The Federal Interpleader Statute also provides for service in any district in which “claimants reside or may be found.” 28 U.S.C. § 2361 (2000).

56. This statement admits of one qualification. McGee’s paraphrase of the purposeful contacts standard, that the defendant have a “substantial connection” with the
The defendant in *Hanson* had more extensive contacts with the forum state than the defendant in *McGee*, but the contacts were of a different sort, and the difference was critical. The defendant, the Wilmington Trust Company, a Delaware corporation and trustee of a trust instrument executed in Delaware by Dora Browning Donner, continued to administer the trust jointly with Donner after she moved to Florida. When Donner died, two of her daughters, also residents of Florida, contested an inter vivos appointment of $400,000 she had made under the trust to the children of a third daughter. The validity of the original trust agreement was an issue in the will contest, and thus, in the Court’s eyes, the Trust Company was an indispensable party to the Florida suit. The jurisdictional issue arose when the Company objected to Florida long-arm jurisdiction on the ground that it did not do or solicit business in Florida. It acknowledged that it had numerous business contacts with Donner over the years while she lived in Florida, but argued that those contacts were not purposeful in the jurisdictional sense of the term, and the Supreme Court agreed. The reason, said the Court, was that Donner, rather than the Trust Company, was responsible for creating the Company’s contacts with Florida; the contacts did not result from a purposeful act by the Company to do business in the State. In the Court’s words, there was “no instance in which the trustee performed any acts in Florida that bear the same relationship to the [trust] agreement as the [insurance] solicitation in *McGee* [bore to California].” The Company did not seek to exercise the privilege of doing business in Florida, it simply followed Donner when she went there, so to speak. Failing to sever a relationship with a prior customer state, has proved particularly popular. See, e.g., *Bird v. Parsons*, 289 F.3d 865, 875 (6th Cir. 2002); *Hollis Petroleum LLC v. U.S. Rest. Props. Operating, L.P.*, No. 05-01-00781-CV, 2002 Tex. App. LEXIS 450, at *4 (Tex. App. Jan. 24, 2002).

57. See, e.g., *Rose v. Firstar Bank*, 819 A.2d 1247, 1252-54 (R.I. 2003) (rejecting *McGee* and applying *Hanson* to a fact situation analogous to both cases).

58. This is not precise terminology. *Hanson* was actually two cases, one in Delaware and one in Florida, both racing to get to the Supreme Court first, and the Denckla sisters were plaintiffs in one and defendants in the other. *Hanson v. Denckla*, 357 U.S. 235, 240-42 (1958). There also were two Delaware trust companies involved. None of this procedural complexity is necessary for our purposes here.

59. Id. at 238-39.

60. Id.

61. Id. at 254.

62. Id. at 251-52.

63. Id.

64. Id.

65. Id. at 252.

66. Id.
in a new forum, it turned out, was not the same thing, at least not for jurisdictional purposes, as soliciting new customers in that forum.

Hanson also reined in much of the sweeping language of McGee. It was a mistake, the Court said, “to assume that this trend [toward extending personal jurisdiction, highlighted in McGee] herald[ed] the eventual demise of all restrictions on the [extra-territorial power] of state courts.”67 Rejecting inconvenience as the principal concern, the Court pointed out that those restrictions were “more than a guarantee of immunity from inconvenient or distant litigation,” they were “a consequence of territorial limitations on the power of the respective States.”68 “However minimal the burden of defending in a foreign tribunal,” the Court added, “a defendant may not be called upon to do so unless he has had the ‘minimal contacts’ with that State that are a prerequisite to its exercise of power over him.”69 Hanson was the Court’s first strong, explicit reliance on the so-called defendant-veto view to justify a jurisdictional decision. In this view, a defendant can literally veto jurisdiction by structuring its operations to avoid doing business in a state.70 It does not matter that it might have extensive business contacts with the state (the Wilmington Trust Company had extensive business contacts with Florida), or that the state might be a convenient place to litigate (in many ways Florida was as convenient as Delaware for the Wilmington Trust Company). As long as the defendant does not take the initiative in making the connection with the state, it will not be forced to litigate there. In a real sense, the defendant controls the reach of the state’s jurisdictional power.

McGee and Hanson reached results that are the opposite from what one might have expected. The Wilmington Trust Company did extensive business in Florida and could afford to litigate there, and yet it was not subject to Florida jurisdiction.71 And the International Life Insurance Company did almost no business in California and probably would have lost money had it been forced to litigate there, and yet it was subject to jurisdiction in California.72 The two decisions are not inconsistent of

67. Id. at 251.
68. Id.
69. Id. Because of its similarity to “minimum contacts,” “minimal contacts” was an unfortunate choice of words. “Minimum contacts” in International Shoe was a synonym for “constitutionally sufficient contacts,” not “a few” contacts, and the similarity of the two expressions encourages a reader to miss the distinction. See Int’l Shoe Co. v. Washington, 326 U.S. 310, 317 (1945). Imprecise usage like this gave later courts a basis on which to ground their modifications (intentional or otherwise) of the doctrine.
70. Hanson, 357 U.S. at 251-52.
71. Id.
course (accepting Hanson’s characterization of McGee)\textsuperscript{73} if the purposefulness of a defendant’s contacts with a forum is a critical feature of the personal jurisdiction doctrine, and after McGee and Hanson it is hard to argue that it is not. In retrospect, the two cases appear to be the first post-International Shoe skirmish between the totality-of-the-circumstances and defendant-veto views of personal jurisdiction, with the defendant-veto view coming out the clear winner. (This will prove prophetic of outcomes to come.) Having settled (if only temporarily) this basic policy debate, the Court did not take up another major personal jurisdiction case for more than twenty years,\textsuperscript{74} or until 1980.

\textsuperscript{73} In summarizing McGee, Hanson emphasizes the purposefulness of the insurance company’s connections with California as a central factor in the McGee decision, but in the McGee opinion itself, this factor does not receive any particular emphasis. Compare Hanson, 357 U.S. at 251-52, with McGee, 355 U.S. at 223-24. By any objective standard Hanson has to be the more important opinion. Unlike McGee, it reflects a full airing of the Court’s widely varying views on the due process issue, see supra note 53, states those views more as a rule than a policy (also unlike McGee), comes later in time, and explicitly rejects the McGee view, see Hanson, 357 U.S. at 251, as articulated by Justice Black in a dissent, see id. at 259-59 (Black, J., dissenting). More importantly perhaps, the Court seemed eager to use Hanson to announce a new jurisdictional standard. The due process interests in the case were those of the Wilmington Trust Company, but the Trust Company was not a party to the proceeding, and no other party had standing to raise its interests. See id. at 241-42, 244-45. The Court finessed this problem by finding the Company indispensable under its reading of Florida law, see id. at 245 & nn. 6-7, but the Supreme Court of Florida, the ultimate authority on Florida law, “found it unnecessary to determine whether” this was so, id. at 254. The Florida Court’s position seems more sensible. The Trust Company had no interests of its own involved in the case. It simply wanted to know to whom to distribute the proceeds of the trust. It was a stakeholder pure and simple, and a stakeholder is not ordinarily an indispensable party. At a minimum, one would have expected the Supreme Court to send the issue back to the Florida Supreme Court for a definitive ruling on the question of Florida law, but the Court seemed more interested in articulating a new due process standard than in resolving the case.

\textsuperscript{74} A at one time, Shaffer v. Heitner, 433 U.S. 186 (1977), would have been considered an exception to this statement, but time has not treated Shaffer well and the case has no continuing major influence on the personal jurisdiction doctrine that I can discern. The Court in Shaffer spoke in bold, sweeping, and authoritative terms, as if pronouncing for all questions of long-arm jurisdiction, for all time, and academic symposia touting the importance of the decision were rampant. See, e.g., Symposium on Shaffer v. Heitner, 45 BROOK. L. REV. 493 (1979); Symposium, The Impact of Shaffer v. Heitner, 1978 WASH. U. L.Q. 273; see also Earl M. Maltz, Reflections on a Landmark: Shaffer v. Heitner Viewed from a Distance, 1986 BYU L. REV. 1043, 1043-44; Linda J. Silberman, Shaffer v. Heitner: The End of an Era, 53 N.Y.U. L. REV. 33, 34 (1978). But Shaffer’s well-known formulation of the standard, that “minimum contacts” requires a three-part “relationship among the defendant, the forum, [and] the litigation,” seemed to eliminate the category of general jurisdiction, which requires only a two-part relationship between the defendant and the forum. Shaffer, 433 U.S. at 204. And its statement that “all” assertions of long-arm jurisdiction were governed by the “minimum contacts” standard seemed to eliminate the so-called single-factor jurisdictional tests, such as transient and status jurisdiction. Id. at 207-08. The Court later corrected these mistakes, explaining in Helicopteros that it did not mean to do away with general jurisdiction, and making it clear in Burnham that at
when it revisited the doctrine with enthusiasm in Woodson. Woodson was the Court’s first great, systematic restatement of the minimum contacts standard, synthesizing all that had happened since International Shoe, and with a few, minor, cosmetic changes, it still describes the doctrine as it operates today.

C) General Jurisdiction: Perkins

Before moving on to Woodson, however, it is necessary to take a brief step back to consider the doctrine of general jurisdiction, the second of International Shoe’s four contacts-nexus categories, and the one that has turned out to be hardest to define. General jurisdiction permits a court to hear any cause of action against a defendant, no matter what the type, and no matter where it arises.\textsuperscript{75} This is the defining feature of the doctrine, that a party can be sued for anything without the plaintiff having to show a relationship between the claim and the forum.\textsuperscript{76} Only the defendant’s relationship with the forum is relevant.\textsuperscript{77} This much is uncontroversial. But difficulties arise when one tries to describe what type of contacts are needed to make general jurisdiction available. International Shoe was a specific jurisdiction case, so it did not discuss general jurisdiction at any length, but it made some things clear. For example, the decision differentiated between the two types of jurisdiction, concluding that specific jurisdiction is available when the defendant has “continuous and systematic” contacts with a forum and the contacts “give rise to the liabilities sued upon,”\textsuperscript{78} and general jurisdiction is available only when the defendant’s contacts are “so substantial and of such a nature as to justify suit . . . on causes of action arising from dealings entirely distinct from those” contacts.\textsuperscript{79} The key difference between these two types of jurisdiction, though it is not always noticed,\textsuperscript{80} is between “continuous and systematic” contacts on the one
Defendant Veto” or “Totality of the Circumstances”?  

While there will be hard cases, the idea of “continuous and systematic” contacts, by itself, is not difficult to understand. Contacts are continuous and systematic when they occur at regular intervals, over an extended period of time, and are organized according to some kind of plan or design. Marketing goods or services to retail customers in a state through a network of advertisers, distributors, sales agents, and retail stores is a classic example.

But explaining the difference between these two terms is where the real difficulties begin.

While there will be hard cases, the idea of “continuous and systematic” contacts, by itself, is not difficult to understand. Contacts are continuous and systematic when they occur at regular intervals, over an extended period of time, and are organized according to some kind of plan or design. Marketing goods or services to retail customers in a state through a network of advertisers, distributors, sales agents, and retail stores is a classic example. But how “substantial” contacts differ is not as easy to explain. There is no sharp difference between the two expressions linguistically, and in certain contexts they could be just different ways of saying the same thing. The nature of the differences must be found, I believe, in the underlying purposes the doctrine of general jurisdiction seeks to advance. The most important such purpose concepts of “continuous and systematic” contacts and “substantial” contacts as if they were synonyms. Academic commentators make the mistake at least as majestically as the Court, writing whole articles on the false premise that “continuous and systematic” contacts are the same as “substantial” contacts for purposes of general jurisdiction. See, e.g., Twitchell, supra note 1, at 184. Professor Twitchell criticizes the use of a “doing business” standard (which, in context, was a synonym for "systematic and continuous" contacts) for general jurisdiction, but only on policy and principle grounds. Id. at 203-04. She never points out that the view also is based on a doctrinal mistake, and on a careless reading of the International Shoe and Perkins cases. She mentions the concept of “substantial” contacts, but doesn’t seem to recognize that it has independent doctrinal significance. See id. at 184. And while she shows in considerable detail that continuous and systematic contacts cannot support general jurisdiction, she fails to point out that the Supreme Court has never held that they can. Id. at 182-90. She seems unduly impressed by the number of lower courts adopting this view. It is as if she thinks these decisions have a kind of legitimacy by virtue of their number. The decisions are just doctrinal mistakes, however, and arguing against them on policy and principle grounds alone actually breathes a kind of life into them and gives them a legitimacy she otherwise wants to deny. Id. at 174, 183-84.

Sarah Cebik makes a more exaggerated version of the same mistake. In addition to getting the quantitative test for general jurisdiction contacts wrong, she adds Burger King’s “fairness factors” to the test, see Cebik, supra note 37, at 9-11, uses “minimum contacts” as an ordinary language expression rather than as a term of art, see, e.g., id. at 9, miskdescribes the nature of the debate over the definition of nexus in the specific jurisdiction doctrine, see, e.g., id. at 2, asserts that International Shoe rejected a territoriality based view of personal jurisdiction when it replaced Pennoyer’s framework with the “minimum contacts” standard, and treats the “reasonably anticipate being haled into court” language as if it stated an independent jurisdictional standard, id. at 17-18, all of which are mistaken. Ironically, she criticizes the Court’s elaboration of the personal jurisdiction doctrine as incoherent, not realizing that she has introduced most of the incoherence she finds.

82. See Int'l Shoe, 326 U.S. at 317-20.
is to insure that there is at least one place where every individual (including individual corporations) will be answerable to the legal claims of others, and thus within the reach of law.\textsuperscript{84} If there was no such default location where someone could always be sued, a sufficiently clever party could violate another's legal rights and remain free from legal recourse, creating a world of rights without remedies.\textsuperscript{85}

On the other hand, parties should not be forced to defend in forums where they will not be treated fairly. The Due Process Clause demands as much. Since general jurisdiction presupposes the lack of a relationship between the forum and the plaintiff's claim, it follows that it should be available only in states where defendants are sufficiently present that it is reasonable to expect that they will be treated fairly by local courts and juries. The state of domicile is the most obvious example of such a forum for an individual,\textsuperscript{86} and the state where it has its principal place of business is the most obvious example for a corporation.\textsuperscript{87} In these and equivalent places, defendants pay taxes, provide employment, perform civic works, and otherwise behave as full citizens of the community. They will be looked upon as "locals," or "insiders" in Professor Brilmayer's terminology,\textsuperscript{88} by the state's judicial system, as part of the state family, so to speak, and as a consequence, not be subject to the types of prejudice typically directed at outsiders.\textsuperscript{89} It follows that it is not unfair to force them to litigate there.\textsuperscript{90} Substantial\textsuperscript{91} contacts should be

\textsuperscript{84} See Int'l Shoe, 326 U.S. at 317.

\textsuperscript{85} For an example of an attempt to do this, see Twentieth Century-Fox Film Corp. v. Taylor, 239 F. Supp. 913, 914 (S.D.N.Y. 1965). Taylor was a lawsuit against Elizabeth Taylor for disruptions occurring during the filming of the movie Cleopatra, when Taylor was living abroad and was a U.S. citizen but not the citizen of any state. Id.

\textsuperscript{86} See, e.g., Panavision Int'l, L.P. v. Toeppen, 141 F.3d 1316, 1320 (9th Cir. 1998) ("General jurisdiction exists when a defendant is domiciled in the forum state . . . ."); see also Milliken v. Meyer, 311 U.S. 457, 462 (1940).

\textsuperscript{87} Int'l Shoe, 326 U.S. at 317.

\textsuperscript{88} See Brilmayer, How Contacts Count, supra note 37, at 87.

\textsuperscript{89} There will be instances when this will not be true, of course. Companies can do things that will give them reputations as bad citizens. But as a general matter, large employers who contribute to the economic well-being of a state are looked upon as insiders and will be protected as such, and doctrinal rules have to operate on generalizations about such factual matters. Some courts express this idea as a "general presence" in the state. See Aeroglobal Capital Mgmt., LLC v. Cirrus Indus., Inc., C. A. No. 01C-08-089 (CHT), 2003 Del. Super. LEXIS 3, at *15 (Del. Super. Ct. Jan. 2, 2003) ("General jurisdiction is the finding of jurisdiction over the non-resident defendant based on his general presence in the State . . . .").

\textsuperscript{90} Professor Brilmayer discusses this idea in terms of the defendant's ability to protect its interests within the state's political rather than judicial processes. Brilmayer, How Contacts Count, supra note 37, at 87. See also Lea Brilmayer, Rights, Fairness, and Choice of Law, 98 Yale L.J. 1277, 1280 (1989), for an elaboration of her concept of "political fairness." I find her argument persuasive, and mean only to add to it. Sarah
seen, then, as the kind of contacts that give defendants the type of presence in a state that will cause them to be regarded as state citizens. While several Supreme Court decisions mention the doctrine of general jurisdiction, and one discusses it at length, Perkins is the only case in which the Court used the doctrine to justify an assertion of jurisdiction. The defendant in Perkins was a Philippine gold and silver mining company "[whose] operations . . . were completely halted during the occupation of the [Philippine] Islands by the Japanese" during the

Cebik argues the same point on the basis of state sovereignty interests, see Cebik, supra note 37, at 12, but as we will see, a "fairness" (to the defendant) argument is easier to ground in the Due Process Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment because the Due Process Clause protects individual rather than state interests, see Ins. Corp. of Ir. v. Compagnie des Bauxites de Guinee, 456 U.S. 694, 702 (1982).

91. For other ways of translating the somewhat abstract concept of "substantial" contacts into more specific, operational language, see Cebik, supra note 37, at 31-41, and Twitchell, supra note 1, at 207-12.

92. Because it is an option of last resort, general jurisdiction should be limited in availability, see Nichols v. G.D. Searle & Co., 991 F.2d 1195, 1200 (4th Cir. 1993) (concluding that "broad constructions of general jurisdiction should be generally disfavored"), and the most sensible way to provide this limit is to restrict it to a defendant's "home state" so to speak, that is, the state of domicile for an individual, and the state of incorporation and state of principal place of business for a corporation, though large, national, and multinational corporations can present special cases, see Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer Studios Inc. v. Grokster, Ltd., 243 F. Supp. 2d 1073, 1083 (C.D. Cal. 2003) ("General jurisdiction . . . requires that defendant's contacts be of the sort that 'approximate physical presence.'" (citation omitted)); see also Mary Twitchell, The Myth of General Jurisdiction, 101 Harv. L. Rev. 610, 676 (1988). Once agreeing, Professor Twitchell now has had second thoughts about this view. See Twitchell, supra note 1, at 205-12. Professor Stein has described the defendant's "home state" as the state the defendant has adopted as its sovereign. See Allan R. Stein, Styles of Argument and Interstate Federalism in the Law of Personal Jurisdiction, 65 Tex. L. Rev. 688, 758 (1987). The "home state" view has been adopted by both the Hague Convention for jurisdiction over foreign defendants, and the European Union Convention on Jurisdiction and Enforcement of Judgments (the Brussels Convention).


Second World War.\textsuperscript{95} The president of the company (who was also its general manager and principal stockholder) returned to his home in Ohio to carry on the "necessarily limited wartime activities of the company."\textsuperscript{96} While in Ohio, the president prepared correspondence, drew and distributed salary checks, conducted directors' meetings, purchased machinery, maintained bank accounts, and supervised the rehabilitation of mining properties in the Philippines, all on behalf of the company.\textsuperscript{97} To the extent that the company continued to exist at all during the war, it did so in the form of the president (and two secretaries), located in Ohio.\textsuperscript{98} Perkins sued the company in Ohio state court (after lawsuits in the Philippines, New York, and California had proved unsuccessful),\textsuperscript{99} for failure to pay dividends and issue stock certificates she claimed were owed to her.\textsuperscript{100} Her claims did not arise in Ohio or have anything to do with the company's business activities there.\textsuperscript{101} The company moved to quash service arguing that, as a foreign corporation, it was not subject to personal jurisdiction in Ohio on a cause of action not arising there.\textsuperscript{102} The Ohio Supreme Court agreed,\textsuperscript{103} but the U.S. Supreme Court did not.\textsuperscript{104}

In language that, in retrospect, may have been a little too casual, the Court first explained that "if [a] corporation carries on . . . continuous and systematic corporate activities" in a state, "those activities are enough to . . . subject that corporation to proceedings in personam in that state, at least insofar as the proceedings in personam seek to enforce causes of action relating to those very activities or to other activities of the corporation within the state."\textsuperscript{105} This was International Shoe's principal test for specific jurisdiction, but as the Court quickly acknowledged, it did not apply in Perkins.\textsuperscript{106} The problem in Perkins, said the Court, "takes us one step further."\textsuperscript{107} Because Perkins's cause of action did not arise out of the mining company's activities in Ohio, she must show that the company had "substantial" (not just "continuous and

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{96} Id. at 447-48.
  \item \textsuperscript{97} Id. at 448.
  \item \textsuperscript{98} Id. at 447-48.
  \item \textsuperscript{99} Id. at 438 n.1.
  \item \textsuperscript{100} Id. at 438-39.
  \item \textsuperscript{101} Id. at 438.
  \item \textsuperscript{102} See id. at 439.
  \item \textsuperscript{103} Id.
  \item \textsuperscript{104} Id. at 449.
  \item \textsuperscript{105} Id. at 445-46.
  \item \textsuperscript{106} See id. at 446.
  \item \textsuperscript{107} Id.
\end{itemize}
systematic") contacts with the State.\textsuperscript{108} As the Court put it, the task was to "consider, in more detail, the issue of whether . . . the business done in Ohio by the . . . mining company was sufficiently substantial and of such a nature as to permit Ohio to entertain a cause of action [that] arose from activities entirely distinct from [the company's] activities in Ohio."\textsuperscript{109} The key term in this description of the difference between general and specific jurisdiction is "substantial." The Court distinguished clearly (and sensibly) between the type of contacts needed to support jurisdiction over claims arising in Ohio and claims arising elsewhere, and it used the terms "continuous and systematic" and "substantial," to express this distinction.\textsuperscript{110} Unfortunately, the Court did not use this terminology as consistently as one would like, and this created problems that I will describe shortly. But "substantial" contacts was the Court's original way of describing the due process requirements for general jurisdiction, and it is still the most sensible way to describe the requirement.

The requirement of "substantial" contacts appears in that part of the Perkins opinion describing the legal rule to be applied in the case.\textsuperscript{111} Unfortunately, in two other less significant parts of the opinion, the Court muddied the waters somewhat by describing the test for jurisdiction over the mining company as requiring only "continuous and systematic" contacts with the State of Ohio,\textsuperscript{112} and these references created some mischief in the case law down the road. In the very first paragraph of the opinion, for example, where it stated the question presented by the case, the Court described the mining company as "carrying on in Ohio a continuous and systematic, but limited, part of its general business."\textsuperscript{113} And similarly, at the very end of the opinion, in summarizing the activities supporting jurisdiction, the Court described the company's president as carrying on "in Ohio a continuous and systematic supervision of the necessarily limited wartime activities of the company."\textsuperscript{114} In later opinions,\textsuperscript{115} the Court has seemed to use this "continuous and systematic" language (sometimes supported by a citation to these peripheral parts of Perkins), to describe the due process

\textsuperscript{108} Id. at 446-47 (quoting Int'l Shoe Co. v. Washington, 326 U.S. 310, 318-19 (1945)).
\textsuperscript{109} Id. at 447.
\textsuperscript{110} Id. at 445-46.
\textsuperscript{111} Id. at 446.
\textsuperscript{112} Id. at 448.
\textsuperscript{113} Id. at 438.
\textsuperscript{114} Id. at 448.
standard for general jurisdiction, and many lower courts, both federal and state, have followed suit. But to interpret the requirement of “continuous and systematic” contacts to mean the same thing as “substantial” contacts is just a mistake, no matter how frequently it is made. International Shoe differentiated clearly between the two categories of contacts, Perkins maintained the distinction, albeit inarticulately, pointing out that the source of the distinction was International Shoe, and a careful reading of the case law as a whole would see the distinction as still intact. General jurisdiction requires substantial defendant contacts with the forum; continuous and systematic contacts support only specific jurisdiction. We will come back to this topic shortly, but for the moment it is time to return to the Court’s development of the due process standard for specific jurisdiction.

D) The First Restatement: Woodson

Woodson continued the development of the specific jurisdiction test begun in International Shoe and refined in McGee and Hanson. The underlying story in Woodson is both tragic and horrific, and the Robinsons—the real parties in interest, who did everything right and still lost big—have as much reason to think the law’s an ass as any character in a Dickens novel. Woodson is important doctrinally in large measure because, like Hanson, it is one of the limited number of Supreme Court cases to uphold a denial of extra-territorial jurisdiction, and in so doing, to identify one end of the jurisdictional spectrum. It is

116. See infra note 473.
117. See Perkins, 342 U.S. at 445-46.
118. See id. at 446, 448.
119. At one time many thought that Shaffer was the final word on the personal jurisdiction standard, see supra note 74, but Woodson is a better source than Shaffer for an authoritative restatement of the “minimum contacts” doctrine (and will be until Burger King), because its animating policy of defendant-veto is still the preferred view, and its two-part formulation of the standard (with some minor cosmetic changes) is still the way the Court organizes the doctrine today.
120. World-Wide Volkswagen Corp. v. Woodson, 444 U.S. 286, 288 (1980). Charles Woodson was the Oklahoma State District Court judge against whom two of the defendants sought a writ of prohibition when their motion to dismiss for lack of jurisdiction was denied. Id. at 292.
122. Woodson, 444 U.S. at 299.
a confusing opinion, stating one test and applying another, and in some ways it is more important for one of its dissenting opinions than for its majority opinion (not a common phenomenon, even in an era when one-liners from early Holmes dissents are a familiar part of popular idiom). But it made major changes in the structure of the “minimum contacts” standard, even if it did not do much to alter the standard’s component parts, and the new structure it put in place became the foundation for the Court’s final restatement of the doctrine in the Burger King case a short five years later. \(^{123}\) For better and worse, Woodson is a landmark in the personal jurisdiction field.

As configured in the Supreme Court, the case involved a products liability claim brought by a New York purchaser of an Audi (Robinson) against a New York State Audi dealer (Seaway) and Audi’s northeast regional distributor (World-Wide). \(^{124}\) The Robinsons were hit from behind while driving the car through Oklahoma in the process of moving to Arizona. \(^{125}\) The Audi’s gas tank ruptured in the accident, its doors jammed, the gas ignited, and the car turned into an incinerator, severely burning Mrs. Robinson and two of the Robinson children. \(^{126}\) No one died, but over the next several years all of the burned family members on more than one occasion probably wished that they had. \(^{127}\) Their injuries were gruesome, and the recovery process wasn’t that much better. \(^{128}\) The Robinsons sued Audi and its importer (Volkswagen), in Oklahoma state court on a design-defect theory, and added Seaway and World-Wide as defendants to destroy complete diversity and prevent the case from being removed to federal court. \(^{129}\) This proved a fateful move when Seaway and World-Wide took the case to the Supreme Court. \(^{130}\) The case raised doctrinal problems that had been brewing for some time in the lower federal and state courts, though most of the lawyers in the case did not seem to recognize this, \(^{131}\) and thus gave the Court an opportunity to

\(^{123}\) See Burger King Corp. v. Rudzewicz, 471 U.S. 462, 486 (1985).

\(^{124}\) Woodson, 444 U.S. at 288.

\(^{125}\) Id. Procedurally, the case was an appeal from the denial of a petition asking the Oklahoma Supreme Court for a writ of prohibition to prevent the trial court judge from allowing the case to proceed against Seaway and World-Wide after denying their motions to dismiss. Id. at 289.

\(^{126}\) Id. at 288.

\(^{127}\) See Adams, supra note 121, at 1125-26.

\(^{128}\) See id.

\(^{129}\) Woodson, 444 U.S. at 288. Until they had relocated in Arizona the Robinsons were still citizens of New York. Id. at 287.

\(^{130}\) See id. at 288 n.3 (noting that Audi and Volkswagen did not contest jurisdiction beyond the trial court).

\(^{131}\) Except for the youngest and most inexperienced lawyer in the case. See Adams, supra note 121, at 1130, 1133. See id. at 1134-35, for a discussion of how the case almost did not make it to the Supreme Court.
restore order to a field that was becoming increasingly fragmented. It would turn out that the Court was not quite yet ready to do that.

In many ways, the Woodson decision was based on a reprise and reaffirmation of the defendant-veto policy underlying Hanson. The Court characterized Seaway and World-Wide’s contacts with Oklahoma through the Audi automobile as foreseeable rather than purposeful, and “foreseeability alone,” as the Court explained, “has never been a sufficient benchmark for personal jurisdiction under the Due Process Clause.” It reached the same conclusion with respect to Seaway’s participation in a national network of Audi dealerships, some of which were located in Oklahoma. The Robinsons’ suit was for products liability, not breach of a dealer network agreement, so Seaway’s participation in the network was only collaterally related to the plaintiffs’ claim; it did not give rise to it. As such, Seaway’s activities failed to

132. Woodson, 444 U.S. at 297 (explaining that the rationale underlying the minimum contacts standard is to provide clear notice to a defendant of when it will be subject to suit in a state so that it “can act to alleviate the risk of burdensome litigation by procuring insurance, passing the expected costs on to customers, or, if the risks are too great, severing its connection with the State”). Woodson also repeated Hanson’s objection to the “transformation of the national economy” rationale used in McGee to justify the totality-of-the-circumstances view. Id. at 294.

133. Id. at 295. The Court also discussed the foreseeability/purposefulness distinction in terms of the so-called reasonable anticipation test, that is, whether a defendant “should reasonably anticipate being haled into a court” in the forum state. Id. at 297. This test, first introduced by Justice Marshall in Shaffer, is completely empty, as Justice Brennan pointed out in his dissent, id. at 311 n.18 (Brennan, J., dissenting), and adds nothing to the jurisdictional discussion. To answer the question of whether a defendant should reasonably anticipate being haled into court one must turn to some other test, and that test, rather than the reasonable anticipation test, is the jurisdictional standard. The phrase is just one of Shaffer’s many infelicities, but unlike most of the others, the Court has not repudiated it, and lower court judges seem to like it. See, e.g., Toys “R” Us, Inc. v. Step Two, S.A., 318 F. 3d 446, 451 (3d Cir. 2003); Medinah Mining, Inc. v. A munategui, 237 F. Supp. 2d 1132, 1134 (D. Nev. 2002); Rodriguez Salgado v. Les Nouvelles Esthetiques, 218 F. Supp. 2d 203, 209 (D.P.R. 2002); Carrot Bunch, Inc. v. Computer Friends, Inc., 218 F. Supp. 2d 820, 824 (N.D. Tex. 2002); Euromarket Designs, Inc. v. Crate & Barrel Ltd., 96 F. Supp. 2d 824, 834-35 (N.D. Ill. 2000).

134. Woodson, 444 U.S. at 295. In doing so, the Court was responding to the Supreme Court of Oklahoma, which used a foreseeability rationale to support its decision to find jurisdiction. Id. at 290. Harkening back to Hanson, the Court pointed out that it was no doubt foreseeable that Donner would move to Florida and execute a power of appointment there, and yet that was not enough to establish jurisdiction. “The foreseeability that is critical to due process analysis,” the Court said, “is not the mere likelihood that a product will find its way into the forum State[.] . . . [but that the corporation] purposefully avails itself of the privilege of conducting activities[there].” Id. at 297 (quoting Hanson v. Denckla, 357 U.S. 235, 253 (1958)) (citations omitted).

135. Id. at 298-99.

136. Id.
satisfy the nexus requirement of the specific jurisdiction doctrine. In effect, the Robinsons occupied the same status as the proverbial "third party claiming some relationship with the defendant" who could not, through its unilateral actions, create a contact between the defendants and the forum.

The Court refined the purposefulness requirement further in a discussion of the so-called stream-of-commerce theory of defendant contacts. Borrowed from pollution and noxious substance cases in tort law, the stream-of-commerce theory permits a state to take jurisdiction over a defendant who, while not doing business directly in the state, does so indirectly by placing its product into the "stream-of-commerce," to have it come out of the stream and cause harm in the state. The paradigmatic case is the industrial component manufacturer who sells to other manufacturers rather than retail customers. In a well-known example, a valve manufacturer sold a valve to a boiler manufacturer in another state that in turn incorporated the valve into a boiler sold to a retail purchaser in yet a third state. When the valve failed and the boiler exploded, the injured person wanted to sue both the manufacturer of the valve and the manufacturer of the boiler. But since the boiler manufacturer was the only one who, in the words of the Court, made an "effort . . . to serve . . . the market for its product in [the state]," a "contract" based jurisdictional standard such as "doing business," did not help. Some standard based on a combination of both doing business and producing a tortious effect in the state was needed, and that is where the hybrid stream-of-commerce theory came in. The theory did not apply

137. Id. at 298.
138. Id. at 298-99.
139. Id. at 297-98. Stream-of-commerce is often an unnecessary doctrinal garnish on an ordinary doing-business case. For an example, see Bridgeport Music, Inc. v. Still N The Water Publ'g, 327 F.3d 472, 476-80 (6th Cir. 2003).
140. Selling one's products to an independent company which, in turn, sells directly to the public, is another form of indirect marketing in a state. See Braley v. Sportec Prod. Co., No. Civ. 01-333-JD, 2002 WL 1676293, at *2 (D.N.H. July 16, 2002) (considering a case of a defendant that "sells its products to independent companies and does not supervise, control, or have advance notice of where those companies consequently market [defendant's] products").
142. Id.
143. Woodson, 444 U.S. at 297.
144. Asahi Metal Indus. Co. v. Superior Court, 480 U.S. 102, 112 (1987) (plurality opinion). There is not yet a majority of the Court on record for a particular stream-of-commerce view of "minimum contacts." Id. at 105. Justice O'Connor discussed the issue in considerable detail in Asahi, and formulated an "effects plus" version of the standard, id. at 108-14 (plurality opinion), but her opinion did not command a majority of the Court, id. at 105. Asahi would have been better discussed as a pure torts case. See infra notes 384-96 and accompanying text.
in Woodson, however, because the Robinsons' Audi left the stream of commerce at the site of its retail sale in Massena, New York.\(^{145}\) Once in the hands of the Robinsons, the retail purchasers, the automobile was no longer a commercial product, and thus whatever harm it produced in Oklahoma could not be attributed to Seaway and World-Wide, who were mere commercial conduits for the Audi, and not its manufacturer.\(^{146}\)

More interesting than its discussion of the purposefulness and nexus issues, however, was the Court's restructuring of the "minimum contacts" standard inherited from International Shoe (and Hanson). Here, the Court made a sizeable transformation in the standard as received, altering International Shoe's statement of the doctrine (although mostly just codifying changes already widely accepted) in major ways, and it is these alterations that give Woodson its greatest significance. Woodson's new formulation of the "minimum contacts" test is difficult to describe because the opinion says one thing and does another, and both what it says and what it does are needed for a complete understanding of its new version of the test,\(^{147}\) so I will begin with what the opinion says.

After reaffirming its commitment to the idea of "minimum contacts," the Court, in effect, divided the standard into two parts by discussing it in terms of "two related, but distinguishable, functions."\(^{149}\) The first was the familiar one of protecting "the defendant against the burdens of litigating in a distant or inconvenient forum."\(^{150}\) This was International Shoe's well-known "estimate of the inconveniences" factor in other language.\(^{151}\) Following the Court's new terminology, think of

\(^{145}\) Woodson, 444 U.S. at 298.

\(^{146}\) Id. The Court's discussion does not always maintain the distinction between contract ("doing business") and tort ("effect" and "effects plus") based theories of long-arm jurisdiction, a distinction that is routinely made in enumerated acts long-arm statutes. See, e.g., N.Y. C.P.L.R. § 302(a)(1) (McKinney 2001) ("transacts any business within the state"); id. § 302 (a)(2) ("commits a tortious act within the state"); N.C. GEN. STAT. § 1-75.4(3) (2003) (causing "injury to person or property . . . within . . . this State"); id. § 1-75.4(5)(c) ("promising . . . to deliver or receive within this State . . . goods . . . or other things of value"). The "effects" test has also has been codified in the RESTATEMENT (SECOND) OF CONFLICT OF LAWS § 37 (1971). See also Kulko v. Superior Court, 436 U.S. 84, 96 (1978); UNIF. INTERSTATE & INT'L PROCEDURE ACT § 1.03(1) (withdrawn 1977), 9B U.L.A 310 (1966) ("transacting any business in this state"); UNIF. INTERSTATE & INT'L PROCEDURE ACT § 1.03(4) (withdrawn 1977), 9B U.L.A 310 ("causing tortious injury in this state").

\(^{147}\) Combining the two in a single standard will be one of Burger King's principal contributions to the doctrine.

\(^{148}\) Woodson, 444 U.S. at 291 ("A state court may exercise personal jurisdiction over a nonresident defendant only so long as there exist 'minimum contacts' between the defendant and the forum State").

\(^{149}\) Id. at 291-92.

\(^{150}\) Id. at 292.

this (for the moment at least) as the “inconvenience” half of the now-bifurcated “minimum contacts” test.\textsuperscript{152} A defendant may not be subjected to extra-territorial jurisdiction in a forum in which it would be unreasonably inconvenient for him to defend.\textsuperscript{153} The second function of the “minimum contacts” test was the somewhat new\textsuperscript{154} one of considering the inconvenience to the defendant “in light of other relevant factors,” principally, a variety of state sovereignty and federalism interests affected by the decision to take or deny jurisdiction.\textsuperscript{155} Think of this (also for the moment) as the “other factors” half of the test.\textsuperscript{156} A defendant may not be forced to defend in a forum, even when convenient, when state sovereignty and federalism concerns all cut the other way.

The problem with this statement of the test, of course, is that it says nothing about the role of defendant contacts with the forum—their extent, whether they were purposefully made, their relationship to the plaintiff’s claim, how they were made, and so on—in assessing the defendant’s amenability to jurisdiction. The Court did not ignore contacts altogether. The principal ground for its decision was the conclusion that Seaway and World-Wide’s contacts with Oklahoma either were not purposeful (the automobile contact), or did not give rise to the Robinsons’ claim (the dealer network contact).\textsuperscript{157} But its reformulated “minimum contacts” standard, standing alone, did not authorize the Court to take such purposefulness or nexus considerations into account. Instead, the standard, read literally, limited analysis to a determination of whether it would be inconvenient for Seaway and

\textsuperscript{152} Woodson, 444 U.S. at 292 (“The protection against inconvenient litigation is typically described in terms of ‘reasonableness’ or ‘fairness.’”). After Burger King the terminology and content of this part of the test will change, and it will become known as the “contacts” half of the test.

\textsuperscript{153} Asahi Metal Indus. Co. v. Superior Court, 480 U.S. 102, 116 (1987); Woodson, 444 U.S. at 292.

\textsuperscript{154} Only as stated. The Court had taken such factors into consideration since Pennoyer. Pennoyer v. Neff, 95 U.S. 714, 722-23 (1877).

\textsuperscript{155} Woodson, 444 U.S. at 292. The Court described these concerns as “the forum state’s interest in adjudicating the dispute,” citing to McGee, “the plaintiff’s interest in obtaining convenient and effective relief,” citing to Kulko, “the interstate judicial system’s interest in obtaining the most efficient resolution of controversies,” and “the shared interest of the several States in furthering fundamental substantive social policies,” again citing to Kulko. Id. None of these concerns were new with Woodson. One can find antecedents for each as far back as International Shoe. Int’l Shoe, 326 U.S. at 315, 317-19. But Woodson codified them, and gave them a greater structural importance than they had simply as the bases for individual prior decisions.

\textsuperscript{156} After Burger King this will become the “fairness factors” half of the test. Since Woodson also uses the term “fairness,” but in conjunction with the first half of the test and not the second, one can begin to see the difficulties in keeping terminology straight.

\textsuperscript{157} Woodson, 444 U.S. at 298-99.
World-Wide to litigate in Oklahoma, and whether the interests of Oklahoma and New York as states, individually and in combination, cut the other way.\textsuperscript{158} One might wonder why the Court thought of this as a contacts test at all, though it is clear that at least the majority did. Quoting from International Shoe, the Court said, "[T]he Due Process Clause 'does not contemplate that a state may make binding a judgment in personam against an individual or corporate defendant with which the state has no contacts, ties, or relations.'"\textsuperscript{159} In the Court's mind, contacts was still first among equals of the elements that made up the minimum contacts test.

Since it was clear from the decision that the Court did not mean to eliminate the idea of contacts from the test, the Court's new version of "minimum contacts" had another, equally serious, problem—one which the Court did not explicitly resolve. The inconvenience considerations and state interest factors listed by the Court as relevant to the jurisdictional decision, while uncontroversial in themselves,\textsuperscript{160} were difficult to combine into a single, integrated test. The Court's description of these factors was more of a laundry list than an algorithm, in the sense that it did not say how much of one type of consideration it would take to outweigh how much of another. Like balancing tests generally, the Court's reformulation lacked a metric for comparing and contrasting the different (perhaps even incommensurable) parts of the standard, and thus, also like balancing tests generally, it failed to constrain personal jurisdictional analysis to any significant extent. The Court would fix this problem, at least to a limited extent, five years later in Burger King, but at the time of Woodson it remained a serious concern.\textsuperscript{161}

Woodson also contained the first\textsuperscript{162} explicit attempt by the Court to justify the consideration of state sovereignty and federalism factors in

\textsuperscript{158} Id. at 295-99.
\textsuperscript{159} Id. at 294.
\textsuperscript{160} This is only partly true. The Court's right to rely on state interest factors in making jurisdictional decisions is a hotly contested issue, and the Court itself cannot seem to make up its mind about whether it is entitled to take them into account or not. See infra notes 223-29 and accompanying text.
\textsuperscript{161} In Burger King the Court attempted to solve the problem by introducing the concepts of "compelling case" and "lesser showing" standards for comparing one set of factors with the other. Burger King Corp. v. Rudzewicz, 471 U.S. 462, 477 (1985); see also infra notes 341-47 and accompanying text.
\textsuperscript{162} In the post-International Shoe world, that is. Pennoyer grounded the consideration of state sovereignty concerns in jurisdictional analysis in public international law, see Pennoyer v. Neff, 95 U.S. 714, 732-33 (1877), but when International Shoe replaced Pennoyer's public law standard with the "minimum contacts" test, this option no longer was available. The Court revisited the issue several times over the next few years, changing its mind (and position) each time.
personal jurisdiction analysis. The problem, one will recall, is that the Fourteenth Amendment is the sole limitation on the extra-territorial jurisdictional power of the states. But the Fourteenth Amendment, by its own terms, protects the liberty and property interests of “person[s],” not the sovereignty interests of states. How then is the Court justified in taking sovereignty interests into account in a Fourteenth Amendment analysis? What source of law supports this? In this first attempt at an answer, the Court grounded the right to consider state interests on “principles of interstate federalism embodied in the Constitution.” As the Court explained, the “Framers also intended that the States retain many essential attributes of sovereignty, including . . . the sovereign power to try causes in their courts.” These sovereignty interests, in turn, implied a limitation on the sovereignty interests of all other states—“a limitation [that was] express or implicit in both the original scheme of the Constitution and the Fourteenth Amendment.” As the Court emphasized in a well-known “even if” paragraph:

Even if the defendant would suffer minimal or no inconvenience from being forced to litigate before the tribunals of another State. . . . even if the forum State is the most convenient location for litigation, the Due Process Clause, acting as an instrument of interstate federalism, may sometimes act to divest the State of its power to render a valid judgment.

There was nothing new in this, according to the Court, since even International Shoe had indicated that jurisdiction must be assessed “‘in the context of our federal system of government,’” so as to ensure “the

163. The Court’s timing in this regard suggests that it probably was responding to a criticism of the use of sovereignty concerns in jurisdictional analysis in a well-known 1981 article in the Northwestern University Law Review. See Martin H. Redish, Due Process, Federalism, and Personal Jurisdiction: A Theoretical Evaluation, 75 N.W. U. L. REV. 1112 (1981). The difficulty of justifying the use of sovereignty factors had been recognized for a long time, but the Redish article made the objection too powerful to be ignored any longer. In Insurance Co. of Ireland, two years later, the Court would reverse itself and agree with Redish’s argument, but without mentioning his article. See Ins. Co. of Ir. v. Compagnie des Bauxite de Guinee, 456 U.S. 694, 702 n.10 (1982). Redish’s argument was not without its critics. See Allen R. Kamp, Beyond Minimum Contacts: The Supreme Court’s New Jurisdictional Theory, 15 GA. L. REV. 19, 39-39 (1980) (arguing that the Due Process Clause justifies the consideration of state sovereignty concerns in a personal jurisdiction analysis).

164. Ins. Corp. of Ir., 456 U.S. at 702 n.10; Woodson, 444 U.S. at 287, 291.

165. U.S. CONST. amend. XIV, § 1 (“[n]or shall any State deprive any person of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law . . . .”).

166. Woodson, 444 U.S. at 293.

167. Id.

168. Id. (emphasis added).

169. Id. at 294 (emphasis added).
orderly administration of the laws.’” 170 But few had suspected such innocent phrases to contain so much hidden meaning. An argument that something is constitutionally authorized is difficult to evaluate under the best of circumstances—constitutional law often seems more like religion than law—but when it is not possible even to say whether the authorization is express or implicit, the argument is particularly difficult to assess. 171 This will not be the Court’s last word on the subject, however, so it is perhaps better to wait until the string has played out before considering the argument.

Woodson is also important for one of its dissenting opinions. Justices Brennan, Marshall, and Blackmun dissented separately, but Justice Brennan’s opinion took on added significance when, five years later, he blended parts of it with the Woodson majority view to write the opinion for the Court in Burger King. 172 Since Burger King is the Court’s last definitive statement of the personal jurisdiction doctrine, understanding Brennan’s particular take on the doctrine, as expressed in Woodson, helps pave the way for a more complete understanding of the present state of the doctrine, and helps to put the doctrine in richer context.

Justice Brennan argued for a totality-of-the-circumstances view of extra-territorial jurisdiction because he believed, with Justice Black in McGee, that jurisdictional rules had to adapt to the “fundamental transformation of our national economy.” 173 Finding it “outdated,” 174 he

170. Id. at 293-94 (quoting Int’l Shoe Co. v. Washington, 326 U.S. 310, 317, 319 (1945)). This excerpt is confusing. Read literally, it seems to say that state sovereignty interests are superior to individual liberty interests in personal jurisdiction analysis, but that is almost certainly not what the Court had in mind. In context, the reference to “federalism” restrictions on state power was the Court’s way of describing the need for purposeful defendant forum contacts before jurisdiction could attach. The Court cited to Hanson, a contacts opinion, for the proposition, and the excerpt was part of a paragraph in which the principal point was that a state may not make a binding judgment in personam against an individual with whom it has “no contacts, ties, or relations.” Id. at 294. Moreover, to the extent that the excerpt elevated state sovereignty interests over litigant liberty interests it would have been modified by Insurance Co. of Ireland’s later repudiation of the “instrument of interstate federalism” conception of due process. See Ins. Co. of Ir. v. Compagnie des Bauxites de Guinee, 456 U.S. 694, 702 n.10 (1982) (“The restriction on state sovereign power described in World-Wide Volkswagen Corp. . . . must be seen as ultimately a function of the individual liberty interest preserved by the Due Process Clause . . . [The Clause . . . makes no mention of federalism concerns.”).

171. Cf. Byrd v. Blue Ridge Rural Elec. Coop., 356 U.S. 525, 537 (1958) (“An essential characteristic of [the federal judicial] system is the manner in which . . . it distributes trial functions between judge and jury and, under the influence—if not the command—of the Seventh Amendment, assigns the decisions of disputed questions of fact to the jury.”).


174. Id. (Brennan, J., dissenting).
would have “strip[ped] the defendant of . . . veto power over certain very appropriate fora,” because communication and travel over long distances were no longer slow, and notions of state sovereignty were no longer “impractical and exaggerated.” In “today’s world,” he continued, a forum is appropriate if the “plaintiff can show that [it] has a sufficient interest in the litigation [and] the defendant . . . cannot show some real injury to a constitutionally protected interest.” Minimum contacts must exist, he argued, quoting his dissent in Shaffer, “among the parties, the contested transaction, and the forum state,” but these three separate types of considerations exist in a kind of sliding scale relationship with one another, so that as the significance of one diminishes the significance of the others increase. In this “all things considered” kind of analysis, a defendant’s forum contacts are “merely one way of giving content to the determination of fairness and reasonableness” required by the Due Process Clause. If litigating in a particular form is not burdensome to a defendant, for example, fewer contacts with that forum are needed to justify jurisdiction, and “the interests of the State and other parties [to the] proceeding” are the type of “other considerations” that could provide such justification. In sharp contrast to International Shoe, Justice Brennan believed that defendant forum contacts were not the most important, or perhaps even a necessary, part of the “minimum contacts” standard. Justice Brennan also would have found jurisdiction over Seaway and World-Wide on a stream-of-commerce theory. Unlike the majority, for whom the retail sale of the Audi brought the vehicle out of the stream of commerce, Justice Brennan thought the sale purposefully injected the Audi into the stream, and that it was still there when the Robinsons drove the car to Oklahoma. As he put it: It is difficult to see why the Constitution should distinguish between a case involving goods which reach a distant State through a chain of distribution and a case involving goods which reach the same State because a consumer, using them as the dealer knew the customer would, took them there. In each case the seller purposefully injects the goods into the stream of commerce and those goods predictably are used in the forum State.

175. Id. at 312 (Brennan, J., dissenting).
176. Id. (Brennan, J., dissenting). Requiring a three-way relationship for minimum contacts to exist seems to eliminate the category of general jurisdiction, which requires only a two-way relationship (between defendant and forum), as well as several single-factor jurisdictional tests (e.g., tag jurisdiction, status-adjudications, pure in rem, and the like) which also require only a two-way relationship.
177. Id. at 310 (Brennan, J., dissenting).
178. See id. at 300-10 (Brennan, J., dissenting).
179. Id. at 300 (Brennan, J., dissenting).
180. Id. (Brennan, J., dissenting).
181. Id. (Brennan, J., dissenting).
182. Justice Brennan also would have found jurisdiction over Seaway and World-Wide on a stream-of-commerce theory. Id. at 306-07 (Brennan, J., dissenting). Unlike the majority, for whom the retail sale of the Audi brought the vehicle out of the stream of commerce, Justice Brennan thought the sale purposefully injected the Audi into the stream, and that it was still there when the Robinsons drove the car to Oklahoma. Id. at 306 (Brennan, J., dissenting). For him, the car did not come out of the stream, so to speak, until the accident in Oklahoma. See id. at 306-07 (Brennan, J., dissenting). As he put it: It is difficult to see why the Constitution should distinguish between a case involving goods which reach a distant State through a chain of distribution and a case involving goods which reach the same State because a consumer, using them as the dealer knew the customer would, took them there. In each case the seller purposefully injects the goods into the stream of commerce and those goods predictably are used in the forum State.
Court would adopt this view for purposes of denying jurisdiction, but no decision of the Court has yet adopted it explicitly to uphold jurisdiction.


While the Court’s restatement of the “minimum contacts” standard was not to reach a kind of reflective equilibrium for another five years, in Burger King, in the period immediately following Woodson the Court made a number of what one might think of as “single-factor” additions to the standard, each of which made a distinctive contribution to the Woodson restatement. In fact, it is not much of an exaggeration to say that the cases decided during this five-year period are responsible for most of the details of the modern personal jurisdiction standard, and that the early 1980s was the most productive period in the history of the Court for the personal jurisdiction doctrine, at least to date. Kulko v. Superior Court, for example, explained what the Court meant by its enigmatic reference in Woodson to the so-called “shared interest of the several States in furthering fundamental substantive social policies.” This was one of the most unusual of Woodson’s “other (sovereignty)
factors” against which a defendant’s contacts were to be measured in determining the reasonableness of jurisdiction. Lower courts had experienced a great deal of difficulty giving the idea a precise meaning, and had applied it in a wide variety of not completely compatible ways. While Kulko did not define the outer boundaries of the factor, it gave a mainstream example of what it looked like.

In Kulko, a divorced mother of two living in California petitioned a California state court to modify the custody and support provisions of a New York separation agreement between her and her former husband still living in New York. Initially, in accordance with the agreement, the two children lived with their father during the school year and with their mother during vacations. A bout a year after the separation, the older child asked to reverse this arrangement and her father agreed, buying her a one-way plane ticket to California. Three years later, the younger child told his mother he wanted to reverse the arrangement as well, and, unbeknownst to the father, the mother sent him a plane ticket to come to California. The father contested the jurisdiction of the California state court over the mother’s lawsuit, arguing that apart from the children, he had no contacts, ties, or relations with the State of California. The trial court found jurisdiction, however, and the California Supreme Court affirmed, basing its ruling on the “effects” (the refusal to pay increased support after changing the children’s custody arrangements) produced by the father in the State, but the U.S. Supreme Court reversed.

189. Keeton also may be based, in part, on this factor. The shared policy in that case may have been the interest of the several states embodied in the single publication rule for libel. Like Hanson and Woodson, Kulko also denied jurisdiction and thus helps identify one end of the spectrum of the personal jurisdiction doctrine. Kulko, 436 U.S. at 100-01.
190. Id. at 87-88.
191. Id. at 87.
192. Id. at 87-88.
193. Id. at 88.
194. Id. The couple had been married in California, during a three day trip through the State, but the present action was to modify custody and support arrangements. Id. at 86-88. The couple was already divorced. Id. at 87-88.
195. Id. at 88.
196. Id. at 101.
The Supreme Court discussed the purposefulness of the father’s actions in permitting the children to move to California, and the extent to which he had benefited from the protections of California law, but its analysis of these issues was hurried and unsophisticated. The decision seems most solidly grounded, not on the defendant’s lack of purposeful contacts with the forum as the Court said it was, but instead on the finding that the defendant’s contacts with the forum were outweighed by the concern of preserving “family harmony.” To take jurisdiction, said the Court, would be to “discourage parents from entering into reasonable visitation agreements,” and “would impose an unreasonable burden on family relations.” While couched in the language of purposefulness, this rationale was in fact based on a substantive concern from the area of family law, a surprising move given the Court’s longstanding and clearly stated position that substantive law concerns are irrelevant to jurisdictional analysis, and even more so considering that the policy in question was used to modify a constitutional rule, but this feature of Kulko has not had a lasting effect.

198. For example, the Court does not differentiate between the different circumstances of the two children moving to California, the first with the father’s help, and the second behind his back (with the help of the mother). Kulko, 436 U.S. at 87-88. The first contact seems purposeful in any sense of the term, but the second seems more like a Hanson or Woodson type of contact, in which the connection is brought about by the unilateral actions of third parties (the child and the mother) claiming a relationship with the defendant.

199. Id. at 94 (“A father who agrees, in the interests of family harmony and his children’s preferences, to allow them to spend more time in California than was required under a separation agreement can hardly be said to have ‘purposefully availed himself’ of the ‘benefits and protections’ of California’s laws.” (citation omitted)).

200. Id.

201. Id. at 93.

202. Id. at 98.

203. The Court in Kulko did not take a position on the merits of the mother’s underlying custody and support claim, but that is not the only way substantive concerns can come into the analysis. Id. at 97. Preserving family harmony is not a relevant jurisdictional concern even under the “other factors” half of the Woodson test, since it is not a procedural interest, and it has nothing to do with the issue of providing a forum for citizens, particularly in light of California’s participation in the Uniform Reciprocal Enforcement of Support Act. Id. at 98. Moreover, as the Court stated, “California [did] not attempt[] to assert any particularized interest in trying such cases in its courts by, e.g., enacting a special jurisdictional statute.” Id.

204. See Keeton v. Hustler Magazine, 465 U.S. 770, 780 n.12 (1984) (“[W]e reject categorically the suggestion that invisible radiations from the First Amendment may defeat jurisdiction otherwise proper under the Due Process Clause.”). Mullane is another example of substantive law concerns influencing the jurisdictional analysis. See infra note 248.
Kulko is most important for its discussion of California and New York’s “shared substantive social policy” of providing for the modification of custody and support decrees through an interstate compact. Recognizing “California’s legitimate interest in ensuring the support of [its] children resident[s] . . . without unduly disrupting [their] lives,” the Court indicated that the mother’s proper course for modifying her support decree would have been to file a petition under the State’s Revised Uniform Reciprocal Enforcement of Support Act. That Act, to which New York also was a party, permitted the mother to file a petition for modification in California and have the merits of her claim adjudicated in California and New York without either she or her former husband having to leave home. This interstate mechanism would have been undercut if the California state court had taken jurisdiction over Mr. Kulko. California residents who wanted to modify extra-territorial support decrees would simply circumvent the Uniform Act, and take advantage of a home court, by suing directly in California. To preserve the shared policy which underlay the Act, therefore, the Court had to deny jurisdiction. This was an instance in which a strong state sovereignty interest outweighed weak defendant contacts with the forum. While Kulko has continuing validity for this limited point, the decision has not otherwise been a major influence in the development of the personal jurisdiction doctrine.

Insurance Corp. of Ireland v. Compagnie des Bauxite de Guinee continued the discussion, begun in Woodson, of whether it was legitimate for a court to consider state sovereignty interests in the personal jurisdiction analysis. Unlike most personal jurisdiction cases, the procedural posture of Insurance Corp. of Ireland was a little unusual.

205. Kulko, 436 U.S. at 98.
206. Id. at 98-100.
207. This is true in effect, although not literally. New York was a party to the 1950 Act, and California was a party to the 1968 Act, but as the Court said, the “two-state procedure[s]” for obtaining modifications in each of the Acts were similar. Id. at 99 n.14.
208. Id. n.13 (describing the procedure).
209. See id. n.14.
210. See id.
211. Perhaps the best evidence of this is the fact that Kulko is cited only perfunctorily in Burnham, a nearly factually identical case, and the Supreme Court’s most recent discussion of the subject. See Burnham v. Superior Court, 495 U.S. 604, 626 (1990) (plurality opinion).
213. Id. at 701-08.
The plaintiff, a Guinean mining company,\textsuperscript{215} sued its business interruption insurers in Pennsylvania federal district court for failing to pay on a policy.\textsuperscript{216} The excess-insurers, all of whom were foreign nationals, filed an answer and moved for summary judgment, alleging, inter alia, that the Pennsylvania court lacked personal jurisdiction over them.\textsuperscript{217} What made the case unusual was that the defendants also refused to respond to the plaintiff's discovery requests seeking evidence of the defendants' connection with Pennsylvania needed to support the argument for jurisdiction,\textsuperscript{218} arguing that they could not be compelled to comply with discovery motions until they were subject to the jurisdiction of the court.\textsuperscript{219} Seemingly puzzled by this "chicken-and-egg" problem, the Supreme Court upheld an appeals court finding of jurisdiction based on one or more of four possible rationales, none of which worked perfectly.\textsuperscript{220} The lack-of-a-consensus rationale was not a serious concern, however, given the idiosyncratic nature of the problem, the absence of any real disagreement over how the case should come out,\textsuperscript{221} and the

\textsuperscript{215} Ins. Corp. of Ir., 456 U.S. at 696. The majority owner of the company was a Pennsylvania mining company. Id.

\textsuperscript{216} Id. at 696-97.

\textsuperscript{217} Id. at 696.

\textsuperscript{218} Id. at 698-99.

\textsuperscript{219} Id. at 696.

\textsuperscript{220} As possible bases for the decision, the Court discussed: (1) Federal Rule 37(b)(2)(A) authority to order that facts in issue be taken as established when a party fails to respond to a discovery request, id. at 707-09; (2) the failure to comply with a discovery order as the equivalent of failing to file a Rule 12 motion to dismiss, and thus a waiver of any objection to jurisdiction, id. at 703-05; (3) the filing of an answer and motion for summary judgment as a submission or consent to the jurisdiction of the court, id. at 706-07; and (4) the Hammond Packing presumption (from Hammond Packing Co. v. Arkansas, 212 U.S. 322 (1909)) authorizing a court to treat the suppression of evidence as an admission against interest and permitting the court to find the allegations at issue to be true, Ins. Corp. of Ir., 456 U.S. at 705. The problem with the first of these rationales is that the Federal Rules, by their own terms, see Fed. R. Civ. P. 82 ("[T]hese rules shall not be construed to extend or limit the jurisdiction of the United States district courts . . . ."), and under the provisions of the Rules Enabling Act, see 28 U.S.C. § 2072 (2000) (stating that the [federal] "rules shall not abridge, enlarge or modify any substantive right"), may be used against parties over whom a court already has jurisdiction, but not to create jurisdiction in their own right. The waiver and consent arguments were contrary to fact since the defendants had made it clear with their motion for summary judgment that they were not submitting voluntarily to the jurisdiction of the court. Ins. Corp. of Ir., 456 U.S. at 706. And the Hammond Packing presumption applied only in situations in which the court already had jurisdiction, and like Rule 37, could not be used to create jurisdiction in the first instance. See id. at 705. The Court would have been better off relying on either the presumption that facts alleged in the plaintiff's complaint are true when not rebutted, or the argument that it had jurisdiction to decide jurisdiction.

\textsuperscript{221} The defendants argued, in effect, that they should be able to avoid the law by violating it. Id. at 706-07. Whatever its reason, it is clear that a court cannot accept this argument and continue to function as a court.
likelihood that the problem would not arise frequently in the future. The defendants' argument was based more on wordplay than substance, and was clever more than serious, and not many clients could be expected to pay to make such arguments over and over again.\textsuperscript{222}

In the course of resolving this sui generis problem, however, the Court added to its ongoing discussion of the role of sovereignty factors in the due process analysis. In a seeming aside in the opinion, the Court acknowledged that the “[personal jurisdiction requirement] represents a restriction on judicial power not as a matter of sovereignty, but as a matter of individual liberty.”\textsuperscript{223} Admitting that it had taken the opposite position in \textit{Woodson}, the Court reversed course, stating that the “restriction . . . described in [\textit{Woodson}] . . . must be seen as ultimately a function of the individual liberty interest preserved by the Due Process Clause,”\textsuperscript{224} because “the Clause itself makes no mention of federalism concerns.”\textsuperscript{225} “Furthermore,” the Court continued, “if the federalism concept operated as an independent restriction on the sovereign power of the court, it would not be possible to waive the personal jurisdiction requirement: Individual actions cannot change the powers of sovereignty,”\textsuperscript{226} and yet individuals can waive their due process right not to submit to the jurisdiction of a court.\textsuperscript{227} This concession did not settle the issue, of course; in fact, it made it more complicated, since the Court then needed to explain how sovereignty concerns (e.g., “the forum state’s interest in adjudicating the dispute”) could be part of the individual liberty interest of litigants. It did not take up this question, however, and with good reason, since there was no obvious answer to it, or at least none that has occurred to the Court since \textit{Pennoyer}.\textsuperscript{228} While not a matter of large practical import—the Court has always taken sovereignty concerns into account in personal jurisdiction analysis, it makes sense to do so, and it appears that it always will—the debate over how to justify doing this continues to swirl.\textsuperscript{229} The Court will come back to this question a number of times over the years, but never really put it to rest.

\textsuperscript{222} See id.
\textsuperscript{223} Id. at 702.
\textsuperscript{224} Id. at 703 n.10. In \textit{Woodson} the Court had described the requirement as “reflect[ing] an element of federalism and . . . state sovereignty.” Id. at 702 n.10.
\textsuperscript{225} Id. at 703 n.10.
\textsuperscript{226} Id.
\textsuperscript{227} Id. at 703.
\textsuperscript{228} In \textit{Pennoyer} the Court justified the consideration of sovereignty interests by grounding its decision on an analogy to international law as well as the Due Process Clause. See \textit{Pennoyer v. Neff}, 95 U.S. 714, 732-33 (1877).
Keeton v. Hustler Magazine and Calder v. Jones libel actions decided on the same day, also added new dimensions to different parts of the “minimum contacts” standard. Keeton, like Kulko, was a “sovereignty interests” case. Kathy Keeton, the live-in girlfriend of Bob Guccione, publisher of Penthouse Magazine, at the time of the lawsuit, sued Larry Flynt and Hustler Magazine for publishing crude sexual caricatures of her. She filed the case in New Hampshire federal district court because New Hampshire was the only state in which the statute of limitations had not run on her claim. Both lower courts denied jurisdiction, but the Supreme Court reversed, finding that the “sale of some 10,000 to 15,000 copies of Hustler Magazine in [the] State each month” established the defendants’ “minimum contacts” with New Hampshire.

Limited solely to Keeton’s New Hampshire libel claim, this decision was not controversial. Hustler Magazine sold magazines on a continuous and systematic basis in New Hampshire, and those magazines gave rise to Keeton’s libel claim. Even under International Shoe’s original four-part schemata, this presented a straightforward and relatively easy case of specific jurisdiction under the first of International Shoe’s four categories. But the case was complicated by a peculiar feature of the substantive law of libel.

Neo-federalist Tale of Personal Jurisdiction, 63 S. CAL. L. REV. 257, 269 (1990) (arguing that the key to state court jurisdiction is “the meaning of interstate federalism”); Harold S. Lewis, Jr., The “Forum State Interest” Factor in Personal Jurisdiction Adjudication: Home-Court Horses Hauling Constitutional Carts, 33 MERCER L. REV. 769 (1982); Margaret G. Stewart, A New Litany of Personal Jurisdiction, 60 U. COLO. L. REV. 5, 18-19 (1989) (recognizing state sovereignty concerns in the determination of personal jurisdiction is “mandated by history”); James Weinstein, The Early American Origins of Territoriality in Judicial Jurisdiction, 37 ST. LOUIS U. L.J. 1, 60 (1992) (“The measure of the legitimacy of a state’s assertion of authority over an individual should reflect [a state’s] territoriality.”). The classic discussion, of course, and the one to sound the alarm in a way that could not be ignored, was Martin Redish’s 1981 article in the Northwestern University Law Review. See Redish, supra note 163, at 1120-37.

233. Keeton, 465 U.S. at 773. Keeton sued first in Ohio, but her claims were dismissed as time-barred. Id. at 772 n.1.
234. Id. at 772-774.
235. Id. at 779-81.
236. Id. at 774.

Regular monthly sales of thousands of magazines cannot by any stretch of the imagination be characterized as random, isolated, or fortuitous. It is, therefore, unquestionable that New Hampshire jurisdiction over a complaint based on those contacts would ordinarily satisfy the requirement of the Due Process Clause that a State’s assertion of personal jurisdiction over a nonresident
Under the so-called single publication rule, Keeton was permitted to recover in New Hampshire for all of the damage done to her reputation in every state in which Hustler was sold. The rule was designed to “reduce[] the potential[ly] serious drain of libel cases on judicial resources,” but one of its secondary effects in Keeton’s case was to give the New Hampshire district court jurisdiction over forty-nine libel claims having no connection with the State of New Hampshire, claims the court otherwise could not have heard. It was as if the single publication rule had created a special species of general jurisdiction specifically for libel claims, despite the fact, as the Court has consistently said, that state substantive law provisions cannot be used to modify constitutionally based jurisdictional rules. The Court finessed this problem, as it had in Kulko, by turning to another of the sovereignty factors in Woodson’s statement of the “minimum contacts” test. It was defendant be predicated on “minimum contacts” between the defendant and the State.

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237. The single publication rule states that
[a]s to any single publication, (a) only one action for damages can be maintained; (b) all damages suffered in all jurisdictions can be recovered in the one action; and (c) a judgment for or against the plaintiff upon the merits of any action for damages bars any other action for damages between the same parties in all jurisdictions.


238. “Required” is more accurate, since the failure to raise the claims would bar Keeton from litigating them in any future proceeding. See id.


240. Id. at 777.

241. See id. at 773. Think, for example, of Keeton suing Hustler in New Hampshire for a libel that took place only in Utah. Absent personal service on, or general jurisdiction over Hustler in the State, there would be no basis on which the New Hampshire court could take jurisdiction, since the magazines distributed in New Hampshire would not have given rise to Keeton’s claim in Utah.

242. This is not really a general jurisdiction rule, of course, since the defining feature of general jurisdiction is the right to bring any type of claim against a defendant, no matter where it arises, not the right to bring a specific type of claim, no matter where it arises. See von Mehren & Trautman, supra note 19, at 1136. Maybe it would be better to refer to what the Court created as a doctrine of “restricted general jurisdiction.”

fair, said the Court, “to compel [Hustler] to defend . . . in New Hampshire [for] damages [caused by] all copies of the [magazine], even though only a small portion of those copies were distributed in New Hampshire,” because “New Hampshire . . . has a substantial interest in cooperating with other States, through the ‘single publication rule,’ to provide a forum for efficiently litigating all issues and damages claims arising out of a libel in a unitary proceeding.” Restated in Woodson terms, the Court said, in effect, that “the interstate judicial system’s interest in obtaining the most efficient resolution of controversies,” and the shared states’ interest in their substantive social policies, compensated for Hustler’s lack of purposeful contacts with New Hampshire (in the non-New Hampshire libel cases), and were sufficient in themselves to establish jurisdiction.

What is strange about this conclusion is that it authorized jurisdiction in a situation where the defendants had not just weak contacts with the state, but no contacts at all. With the possible exception of Mullane v. Central Hanover Bank & Trust Co., this is the only time in the history

244. Keeton, 465 U.S. at 775.
245. Id. at 777. The Court also might have relied on the “shared interest[s] of the several States in furthering fundamental substantive social policies,” World-Wide Volkswagen Corp. v. Woodson, 444 U.S. 286, 292 (1980), since, as the Court points out, “[t]he great majority of the States . . . follow the ‘single publication rule.’” Keeton, 465 U.S. at 777 n.8.
246. Woodson, 444 U.S. at 292.
248. 339 U.S. 306 (1950). Mullane involved a petition in New York Surrogate Court for the settlement of common trust funds, many of the claimants to which had no connection with the State of New York, and some of whom did not even know they were claimants. Id. at 309-10. The principal issue in the case concerned the type of due process notice due the fund claimants, but in the course of resolving that issue the Supreme Court also took up the question of the State’s power to adjudicate the rights of claimants who had no contact with New York, and who had not submitted to the authority of the Surrogate Court. Id. at 307-12. Mullane was decided after International Shoe, so the Court should have used the “minimum contacts” standard to resolve this jurisdictional question, but it did not. Instead, it grounded its decision on the state substantive law interest of creating and administering common trust funds. Id. at 313. The Court said, in effect, that it was legitimate for a state to permit the combination of small trusts into larger economic units to encourage the more efficient use of capital and allow the donors and testators of small and moderately sized trusts to use the services of corporate fiduciaries. Id. at 307-09. This interest, said the Court, “is so insistent and rooted in custom as to establish beyond doubt the right of [the State’s] courts to determine the interests of all claimants, resident or nonresident,” id. at 313, and a determination of this sort can be made “only if interests or claims of individuals who are outside of the State can somehow be determined. A construction of the Due Process Clause which would place impossible or impractical obstacles in the way could not be justified.” Id. at 313-14. Mullane’s discussion of this personal jurisdiction question is often overlooked because the decision’s principal focus is on the question of notice, but Mullane is the first major Supreme Court case to ground a personal jurisdiction decision on substantive law concerns. Id.
of the Court, so far as I can tell, that sovereignty interests have been held sufficient in themselves to establish jurisdiction in the absence of defendant contacts with the forum, or put another way, the only time the Court has found “minimum contacts” to exist in the absence of actual contacts. Justices Brennan and Stevens have taken the position over the years that the contacts test is a severable part of the personal jurisdiction standard, and that sovereignty interests alone can establish jurisdiction even in the absence of contacts, but so far as I know the Court has never acted explicitly on that view. Keeton has not proved doctrinally troublesome, however, since lower courts do not cite to this feature of the opinion with any frequency. Calder, on the other hand, has proved to be a can of worms.

The Calder lawsuit grew out of an alleged libel of Shirley Jones, a once popular but now largely forgotten movie and television personality, in an article published in The National Enquirer magazine. Jones sued the Florida-based magazine, along with the writer and editor of the article, in California state court. Only the writer and editor (the defendants) contested jurisdiction, arguing that they did all of their work in Florida and had no control over, or economic stake in, the distribution of the magazine in California. The trial court denied jurisdiction, saying that it would have a “chilling effect” on reporters and editors [who would have] to appear in remote jurisdictions to answer for the content of articles upon which they worked.

249. Justice Brennan says this in his dissent in Woodson. Woodson, 444 U.S. at 300 (Brennan, J., dissenting) (“Surely International Shoe contemplated that the significance of the contacts necessary to support jurisdiction would diminish if some other consideration helped establish that jurisdiction would be fair and reasonable.”). And Justice Stevens says it in his concurring opinion in Asahi. Asahi v. Metal Indus. Co. v. Superior Court, 480 U.S. 102, 121 (1987) (Stevens, J., concurring in part and concurring in the judgment) (“An examination of minimum contacts is not always necessary to determine whether a state court’s assertion of personal jurisdiction is constitutional.”).

250. Mullane and Keeton did not use this rationale directly. The Court has used sovereignty concerns to defeat jurisdiction even in the presence of defendant contacts. See supra notes 223-29, and accompanying text.

251. Jones was Marian the Librarian in the movie The Music Man, and the mother in the television show The Partridge Family. I mention this because most law students ask. Presumably the readers of this Article are an older crowd and remember Shirley Jones.


253. Id. at 784-85.

254. Id. at 789. The defendants analogized themselves to welders who make a boiler which explodes in another state. Id.

California Court of Appeal reversed, finding that the defendants "intended to, and did, cause tortious injury . . . in California."\(^\text{256}\) And the U.S. Supreme Court affirmed, relying on what it described as an "effects" test, but what probably is more accurately described as a new conception of "purposeful contacts."\(^\text{257}\) It is this new conception of purposefulness that makes Calder important.

The "effects" test for long-arm jurisdiction first came into widespread use in the 1950s as a kind of tort-law alternative to the contract-law-based "doing business" standard.\(^\text{258}\) It was designed to deal with the jurisdictional problem created when an out-of-state defendant caused harm in a state not as a consequence of a commercial transaction.\(^\text{259}\) The test was different for single-state torts, those begun and completed in the same state, than it was for multi-state torts, those in which an event set in motion in one state caused harm in another.\(^\text{260}\) Multi-state torts, because they represented less of a contact with the forum, were regulated by a more demanding "effects plus" standard, which required a plaintiff to show not just that the defendant had produced a tortious effect in the state, but also that the defendant had one or more of the "plus" characteristics thought to make it fair to subject a party to jurisdiction.\(^\text{261}\) Generally, "plus" factors tried to separate large commercial actors who did business across state lines and who reasonably could expect to be sued in other states, from local, mom-and-pop enterprises operating

\(^{256}\) Calder, 465 U.S. at 787. The court mistakenly believed that "continuous and systematic" contacts with California were sufficient to establish general jurisdiction over the defendants in the State, but did not base the decision on this conclusion because it also found that neither defendant had continuous and systematic contacts. Id.

\(^{257}\) Calder has some strange language on the subject of contacts generally. For example, it adopted Shaffer's problematic formulation of the "minimum contacts" standard, as requiring a three-way relationship between the defendant, the claim, and the forum, id. at 788, a phrasing the Court would later repudiate in Burnham, see supra note 74. It also said that plaintiff contacts with a forum "may be so manifold as to permit jurisdiction when it would not exist in their absence," Calder, 465 U.S. at 788, but did not explain how this statement can be reconciled with the statement in Keeton that plaintiff contacts with a forum are relevant only insofar as they "enhance [the] defendant's contacts with the forum" because of the defendant's "relationship with the plaintiff," id. at 780. Justice Rehnquist wrote both the Keeton, id. at 774, and Calder opinions, 465 U.S. at 784.


\(^{259}\) Multi-state pollution cases are a common example. See Gray Am. Radiator & Standard Sanitary Corp., 176 N.E.2d 761, 766 (Ill. 1961).

\(^{260}\) The "single-state/multi-state" distinction is now typically made in so-called enumerated acts long-arm statutes, but at the time of International Shoe there was considerable debate over whether such a distinction was needed. Compare Barnes & Reinecke, 209 N.E.2d at 77-80, with Gray, 176 N.E.2d at 762-66 (1965) (illustrating the debate between Illinois and New York courts on the issue).

\(^{261}\) Barnes & Reinecke, 209 N.E.2d at 72.
completely within single states, who could not. The most common “plus” factors, for example, asked if the defendant “derive[d] substantial revenue from interstate commerce,” or “derive[d] substantial revenue from [other] goods or services used or consumed . . . [with]in the state.” The libel in Calder was a multi-state tort, begun in Florida where the article was written, and completed in California (and in every other state) where the article was published and the harm suffered, but this notwithstanding, it would have made little sense for the Court to discuss jurisdiction over the Calder defendants in traditional “effects-plus” terms. The defendants did not derive revenue from interstate commerce, for example, or from goods and services consumed in California, because they were not engaged in interstate commerce—they were employees of a business engaged in interstate commerce. And while they produced a tortious effect in California to be sure, the determination of whether that effect was enough to subject them to jurisdiction of necessity had to be based on some type of “plus” factor other than the nature and size of their business. They did not have a business.

The Court concluded that it was fair to subject the defendants to jurisdiction in California because they wrote a story “drawn from California sources,” about the “California activities of a California resident,” that “impugned [that person’s] professionalism” and harmed her career and reputation in California. In sum, the Court said “California [was] the focal point both of the story and of the harm suffered. Jurisdiction over [the defendants was] therefore proper . . . based on the ‘effects’ of their Florida conduct in California.”

262. See Gray, 176 N.E. 2d at 766.
265. Id. at 785-86.
266. Calder fit into the fourth of the original International Shoe categories, a case of single and isolated contacts giving rise to the claim. Under International Shoe, this meant that the defendants would be subject to California jurisdiction if the “nature[,] quality and the circumstances of [the contacts’] commission” made it fair to force them to defend there. Int’l Shoe Co. v. Washington, 326 U.S. 310, 318. Given the variety of meanings lower courts have given Calder, the Court might have been better off discussing the case in these original terms rather than fashioning a new “targeting” rule.
268. Id. at 799 (quoting World-Wide Volkswagen Corp. v. Woodson, 444 U.S. 286, 297-98 (1980)). The Court cited to Woodson as authority for this conclusion, but a reference to Woodson in this context is difficult to understand. Woodson denied jurisdiction, so the case does not stand for any particular rule articulating what it would take to establish jurisdiction, and it was limited to the question of whether Seaway and World-Wide were doing business in Oklahoma. See Woodson, 444 U.S. at 299. It did not involve an “effects” based jurisdictional test. Finally, the particular pages referred to in
language that has since come to be identified with Calder, the Court explained that the defendants were “not charged with mere untargeted negligence. Rather, their intentional, and allegedly tortious, actions were expressly aimed at California . . . [T]hey knew [their article] would have a potentially devastating impact upon [Jones]. And they knew that the brunt of that injury would be felt . . . in [California].”

In developing this so-called targeting test, a kind of super-purposefulness requirement if you will, the Court did not create a completely new kind of standard. In fact, in one sense, “targeting” was just a variation of the familiar “effects-plus” standard. It required both a tortious effect within the state and some additional factor, here an extra measure of purposefulness, to show that it was fair to take jurisdiction over the defendants. The difficulty with the test, however, is that it has proved difficult to give the concept of targeting a precise meaning. How, for example, does a “targeting” test differ from the “foreseeability” standard found wanting in Woodson? The defendants in Calder, as the Court said, “knew” that their article, if libelous, would harm Jones in California, but the same could be said of Seaway and World-Wide, the defendants in Woodson, who knew that their automobile, if defective, could cause harm to the Robinsons wherever the Robinsons took it. The principal difference between the two cases seems to be more the difference between harm caused by an automobile and harm caused by a magazine article, than it does the difference in the respective defendants’ states of mind. Seaway and World-Wide did not set out to harm the Robinsons, of course, but the same could be said of the defendants in Calder, at least in the legal sense, and to the extent that is not true, it is relevant to the issue of liability and not to jurisdiction.

While the Court did not define targeting explicitly in Calder, it did talk about it, and when it did so it used the language of foreseeability rather than the language of purposefulness. It described the defendants’ states of mind as “knowing” where the harm would be felt rather than as “wantonly, willfully, or maliciously” seeking to harm Jones in California. And this description fit the facts. There was no indication

Woodson discuss the stream-of-commerce version of “minimum contacts,” id. at 297-98, but stream-of-commerce theory is a contract-law based version of the jurisdictional standard, and Calder involved a tort, Calder, 465 U.S. at 789.

270. Id. at 789.
271. Id. at 789-90.
272. Woodson, 444 U.S. at 297.
274. Id. at 789-90.
275. Id. The Court also describes “targeting” as “expressly aiming” tortious actions at the forum, but it is hard to see how this clarifies the concept. See id.
that the defendants searched the United States to learn where Jones lived, and then tailored an article particularly to that market.\textsuperscript{276} They wrote an article about Jones, and she just happened to live in California.

The Court’s failure to provide clearer guidance about what it means to “target” someone presumably was not for a lack of capacity to do so. When it has wanted to describe the difference between purposefulness and foreseeability in the past it has been able to. In\textsuperscript{277} Asahi, for example, Justice O’Connor described in considerable detail the factors needed to turn foreseeable stream-of-commerce contacts into purposeful ones, and yet, in\textsuperscript{278} Calder the Court did not do this. The introduction of a “targeting” conception of purposeful contacts has proved particularly troublesome in the lower federal and state courts where it has become a popular but malleable standard, given all kinds of different meanings as situations require.\textsuperscript{278}

\begin{footnotesize}
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\item Id. at 785-86 & n.4.
\item See United States v. Swiss Am. Bank, Ltd., 274 F.3d 610, 624 n.7 (1st Cir. 2001) (“[W]e note that several circuits do not appear to agree as to how to read Calder.”). The best summaries of the different interpretations are in Pavlovich v. Superior Court, 58 P.3d 2, 8-10 & 8 n.1 (Cal. 2002) (describing the various understandings of targeting expressed by the different circuits), and Griffis v. Luban, 646 N.W.2d 527, 533-34 (Minn. 2002) (describing how “the ‘effects test’ approved in Calder” has been applied in the various circuits). Griffis is a particularly good example of the difficulty of coming up with a non-circular definition of targeting. See id. at 533 (noting other courts’ determinations that (1) targeting requires “‘something more’” than merely producing an effect in the forum, (2) the something more requirement is satisfied by “express[ly] aiming” at the defendant in the forum, and (3) the “expressly aiming” requirement is satisfied by “‘targeting a known forum resident,’” so that targeting, in effect, is defined as expressly aiming, and expressly aiming is defined as targeting (citations omitted)); see also Imo Indus., Inc. v. Kiekert AG, 155 F.3d 254, 265-66 (3d Cir. 1998) (describing a three-pronged test for targeting that reduces to “expressly aim[ing] . . . tortious conduct at the forum”). Some courts see targeting as simply an “in-state effects” or “foreseeability” standard, see, e.g., Janmark, Inc. v. Reidy, 132 F.3d 1200, 1202 (7th Cir. 1997) (concluding that jurisdiction was proper because “the injury and thus the tort occurred in Illinois”; Carrot Bunch Co. v. Computer Friends, Inc., 218 F. Supp. 2d 820, 826 (N.D. Tex. 2002) (concluding that jurisdiction was proper because defendant registered, used, and maintained infringing domain names “with the knowledge that his actions would likely injure [plaintiff] in Texas”); Ahadi v. Ahadi, 61 S.W.3d 714, 720 (Tex. App. 2001) (“[W]hen a nonresident defendant sends false information into a state, . . . there is a foreseeable . . . injury to the resident at its domicile. Therefore . . . it must reasonably anticipate being haled into court there to answer for its actions.”), but most define it to require “something more” than mere awareness that one’s intentional acts will cause harm in the forum state, see, e.g., Revell v. Lidov, 317 F.3d 467, 473, 476 (5th Cir. 2002) (stating that targeting involves a consideration of the “geographic focus” of a libelous article, not just the location of the harm inflicted); Panavision Int’l, L.P. v. Toeppen, 141 F.3d 1316, 1321-22 (9th Cir. 1998) (describing a three-part test and concluding that “there must be ‘something more’ [than posting on a website] to demonstrate that the defendant has directed his activity toward the forum” (quoting Cybersell, Inc. v. Cybersell, Inc., 130 F.3d 414, 418 (9th Cir. 1998)); Imo, 155 F.3d at 265-66
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Helicopteros Nacionales de Colombia, S. A. v. Hall, 279 is the closest the Court has come to clearing up an ambiguity, introduced in International Shoe, in the definition of the nexus requirement of specific jurisdiction, and also is the Court’s second most important (after Perkins) general jurisdiction decision. 280 Helicopteros was a wrongful death action brought by the survivors and personal representatives (plaintiffs) of four employees of a Peruvian construction company killed in a helicopter crash while working on an oil pipeline in Peru. 281 The plaintiffs sued the Texas-based joint venture building the pipeline (WSH), its Peruvian alter ego (Consorcio), the manufacturer of the helicopter (Bell), also based in Texas, and the Colombian transportation company whose pilot was flying the helicopter when it crashed (Helicol), all in Texas state court. 282 Not surprisingly, only Helicol contested jurisdiction. 283 The trial court denied Helicol’s motion to dismiss, 284 the intermediate appeals court reversed, 285 and the Texas Supreme Court did both, first affirming the appeals court decision and then, seven months later, reversing it (and itself). 286 The U.S. Supreme Court broke the tie, so to speak, also by (describing a three-pronged analysis for the application of Calder targeting); Euromarket Designs, Inc. v. Crate & Barrel Ltd., 96 F. Supp. 2d 824, 837 (N.D. Ill. 2000) (“Simply registering a domain name for a website is not sufficient to create jurisdiction without ‘something else.’” (citations omitted)); Griffis, 646 N.W.2d at 534-35 (“[S]omething more than defendant’s knowledge that the plaintiff is a resident of the forum and will feel the effects of the tortious conduct there must be necessary to satisfy the [Calder] test.”); see also Richard Garnett, Dow Jones & Company v. Grutnick: An Adequate Response to Transnational Internet Defamation?, 4 U. MELBOURNE J. INT’L LAW 196 (2003), available at http://ssrn.com/abstract=473041 (advocating a targeting rule for locating jurisdiction in international Internet defamation cases).


280. The Court also uses von Mehren and Trautman’s “specific” and “general” jurisdiction terminology for the first time in Helicopteros, making it clear that it was now doctrinal language. Id. at 414-15 & nn. 8-9. Like Kulko, Woodson, and Insurance Corp. of Ireland before it, Helicopteros is another in the series of cases that cuts back on the totality-of-the-circumstances view of McGee in favor of a defendant-veto view of Hanson.

281. Id. at 409-10. The company, Consorcio, was created solely for the purpose of allowing Williams-Sedco-Horn (WSH), an American joint venture, to enter into a contract with Petro-Peru, the Peruvian state-owned oil company, to construct a pipeline from the interior of Peru to the Pacific Ocean. Id. at 410.

282. Id.

283. According to the Court, “[t]he participants in the joint venture were Williams International Sudamericana, Ltd., a Delaware corporation; Sedco Construction Corporation, a Texas corporation; and Horn International, Inc., a Texas corporation.” Id. at 410 n.1.

284. Id. at 409-12.

285. Id. at 412.

286. Id.

287. Id.

288. Id. at 412-13.
reversing, holding that Helicol was not subject to personal jurisdiction in Texas. 290

The case in the Supreme Court was pretty much over when the respondents (plaintiffs at trial) conceded that their “claims against Helicol did not ‘arise out of,’ and [were] not related to, Helicol’s activities in Texas.” 291 This concession meant that specific jurisdiction was unavailable over Helicol in Texas, and that the plaintiffs would have to establish general jurisdiction if they wanted to keep the case in the State. 292 But to support general jurisdiction they would have to show that Helicol had substantial contacts with Texas, and this was nearly impossible to do for a company that was incorporated, and had its principal place of business, in Colombia, South America. 293

The Helicopteros decision is not important for the difficulty of the issues involved, therefore, or the specific outcome reached, but instead for its considered non-application of the doctrine of general jurisdiction. It is only the second Supreme Court case decided on the basis of that doctrine, and unlike Perkins, this time the Court denied jurisdiction. 294

Before reaching the general jurisdiction question, however, the Court took up the preliminary question of how to define nexus.

One will recall that the Court created a problem for the doctrine of specific jurisdiction when, in International Shoe, it described the nexus requirement in more than one way. 295 These multiple definitions proved confusing over the years and Justice Brennan wanted to use Helicopteros to clear up the confusion, 296 but the rest of the Court chose to “assert no ‘view’ with respect to that issue.” 297 International Shoe had held that a

289. The four opinions in the case were evenly split.
290. Id. at 418-19.
291. Id. at 415.
292. See id. at 414-16.
293. Id. at 409.
296. Helicopteros, 466 U.S. at 424-26 (Brennan, J., dissenting). The basic debate was over whether a “but for” relationship between the defendant’s contacts and the plaintiff’s claim was enough to satisfy the nexus requirement, or whether a “proximate cause” relationship was needed instead. In Woodson, the Court had seemed to reject a “but for” definition of nexus, see World-Wide Volkswagen Corp. v. Woodson, 444 U.S. at 298-99 (stating that financial benefit resulting from the use of defendant automobile dealer’s car in Oklahoma creates only a collateral relation with the State because it has only a “but for” relationship with plaintiff’s claim, and as such is “far too attenuated” a contact to support jurisdiction), but not so clearly as to put the issue to rest.
297. Helicopteros, 466 U.S. at 415 n.10.

We do not address the validity or consequences of such a distinction because the issue has not been presented in this case. Respondents have made no argument
defendant’s continuous and systematic activity in a state must “give rise to the liabilities sued on”\textsuperscript{298} for specific jurisdiction to be present. There must be some substantive overlap, or nexus, in other words, between the facts needed to prove the defendant’s contacts with the forum and the facts needed to prove the plaintiff’s claim.\textsuperscript{299} Unfortunately, in describing the same requirement later in the opinion, the Court twice paraphrased rather than repeated its “give rise to” (or “arise out of”)\textsuperscript{300} language,\textsuperscript{301} using the expressions “connected with”\textsuperscript{302} and “related to”\textsuperscript{303} instead, and as Justice Brennan pointed out in his Helicopteros dissent, these new phrasings were “substantial[ly] different” from the “give rise to” formulation.\textsuperscript{304} The new phrasings seemed to create a less demanding, alternative test for nexus, one requiring only some sort of “significant[ly] relat[ionship]” between the defendant’s forum contacts and the plaintiff’s claim.\textsuperscript{305} The difference was critical in Helicopteros where the plaintiffs’ claim “arose” in Peru (not Texas) where the helicopter was negligently piloted,\textsuperscript{306} but also was “related to” Helicol’s contacts with Texas, since the company purchased and serviced its helicopters in the State, and sent its pilots there for training.\textsuperscript{307} On a “but for” understanding of nexus, therefore, jurisdiction was available in Texas, but on a “proximate cause” understanding, it was not. Fortunately for

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{enumerate}
\item[299] See Brilmayer, How Contacts Count, supra note 37, at 80-88.
\item[300] Int'l Shoe, 326 U.S. at 319-21.
\item[301] “Give rise to” or “arise out of,” appear three times in the opinion, id. at 319, 320, 321, while the “connected with,” id. at 317, and “related to,” id. at 318, paraphrases appear once each.
\item[302] Id. at 317. Because it was describing the absence of jurisdiction, the Court’s actual term was “unconnected with.” Id.
\item[303] Id. at 318. Again, the Court’s actual term was “unrelated to.” Id.
\item[305] Id. at 425 (Brennan, J., dissenting).
\item[306] Id. at 409-10.
\item[307] Id. at 411. The helicopter maintenance and pilot training in Texas did not provide the needed nexus between the defendants’ contacts and the plaintiffs’ (Helicol) claims since the plaintiffs’ claims were for negligent piloting, not negligent maintenance or training. Id. at 412. If present, the latter claims would have been against Bell rather than Helicol, and the Texas court already had jurisdiction over Bell. See id. at 414.
\end{enumerate}
\end{footnotesize}
the Court, the plaintiffs’ concession that their claims neither arose out of, nor were related to, the defendants’ contacts with Texas spared it the task of having to choose between the two standards (if in fact they were two standards), and permitted it to leave the issue for another (still to come) day.\textsuperscript{308} But this result left lower court confusion on the topic unabated.

The more important part of \textit{Helicopteros}, the Court’s discussion of general jurisdiction, began with a familiar but understandable mistake. “[W]hen the cause of action does not arise out of or relate to the foreign corporation’s activities in the forum State,” said the Court, “due process is not offended by a State’s subjecting the corporation to its in personam jurisdiction when there are sufficient contacts between the State and the foreign corporation,”\textsuperscript{309} This is a tautology, of course, for it says only that contacts are “sufficient” for general jurisdiction when they are “sufficient” for general jurisdiction. In explaining when contacts are sufficient, however, the Court relied on \textit{Perkins} and its discussion of the Benguet Mining Company’s activities in Ohio during the Second World War.\textsuperscript{310} Unfortunately, the Court quoted the wrong language from \textit{Perkins}. “The exercise of general jurisdiction . . . was ‘reasonable and just’” (in \textit{Perkins}), said the Court, because “the foreign corporation . . . ‘ha[d] been carrying on in Ohio a continuous and systematic, but limited, part of its general business.”\textsuperscript{311} The Court’s choice of this “continuous and systematic” rather than “substantial” contacts language from \textit{Perkins} conflated two separate and distinct tests. \textit{Perkins} had described

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{enumerate}
\item[308.] Id. at 415. The Court described the plaintiffs (through counsel), as having “concede[d]” this point, id., but it might be more accurate to say that the plaintiffs never saw it. They failed to make a “related to” nexus argument, or even mention the “arise out of/related to” distinction, anywhere in the four page argument section of their brief on the merits, see Brief of Respondents at 16-20, \textit{Helicopteros} (1984) (No. 82-1127), notwithstanding that the defendants’ brief (filed a month earlier because defendants were the petitioners in the Supreme Court) discussed the issue in detail and argued for an “arise out of” definition of nexus, see Brief for Petitioner at 11-12, \textit{Helicopteros} (No. 82-1127). The plaintiffs made only a general jurisdiction argument, and one based on the probably non-existent (Shaffer notwithstanding) doctrine of jurisdiction by necessity, see Brief of Respondents at 16-20, \textit{Helicopteros} (No. 82-1127), but not much else. And in oral argument, after Justice Brennan suggested to defendants’ counsel that “related” contacts might satisfy the nexus requirement, counsel for the plaintiffs failed to pick up on this cue and argue the point. See Oral Arguments at 3, \textit{Helicopteros} (No. 82-1127). In a sense, failing to argue a point is one way of conceding it, but to the extent that the Court meant to suggest that plaintiffs’ counsel made a conscious and considered judgment to concede the nexus-definition issue, that suggestion is probably an overstatement. Counsel seemed not to be aware of the fact that there was an issue to concede.
\item[309.] \textit{Helicopteros}, 466 U.S. at 414 (emphasis added) (citing \textit{Perkins v. Benguet Consol. Mining Co.}, 342 U.S. 437 (1952)).
\item[310.] Id. at 414-15.
\item[311.] Id. at 415.
\end{enumerate}
\end{footnotesize}
“continuous and systematic” in-state activity as the test for specific jurisdiction, and “substantial” in-state activity as the test for general jurisdiction, and yet the Helicopteros Court’s casual reading of the opinion effaced this distinction. The misreading was harmless in Helicopteros itself, since the Court also concluded, improbably one might add, that the company’s considerable helicopter business in Texas was not sufficiently “continuous and systematic” to support jurisdiction, but the effect on the case law generally has not been as sanguine. Lower courts (and even the Supreme Court, in Burger King) routinely quote Helicopteros for the proposition that general jurisdiction requires only “continuous and systematic” in-state activity, find this requirement satisfied by some form of doing business in the state, and then routinely take general jurisdiction over corporations carrying on any minimal amount of commercial activity in the state. This is a mistake not only for reasons of policy and principle, as Mary Twitchell argues, but also because it gets the doctrinal standard wrong.

F) The Second Restatement: Burger King

After the foregoing series of mid-course corrections, the Court revisited the personal jurisdiction doctrine one more time in Burger King Corp. v. Rudzewicz, to make what, until the present, is its most comprehensive and sophisticated statement of the “minimum contacts” standard. Coming at the end of the line, Burger King was able to incorporate the distinctive ideas of each of the foregoing cases into a new synthesis, and also to resolve some of the issues left open by Woodson.

The Burger King Corporation sued one of its Michigan franchisees in federal district court in Florida, alleging a breach of the franchise agreement and infringement of Burger King’s trademark occasioned by the defendants’ continued operation as a Burger King restaurant. The decision itself ultimately rested on a kind of 800-pound gorilla argument, that the defendants could not reap the benefits of a long-term affiliation with an organization as all encompassing and powerful as Burger King,
which they knew to be headquartered in Florida,\footnote{Id. at 480-81.} submitting to the national organization's exacting regulation of virtually every conceivable aspect of their operations,\footnote{Id. at 465.} and at the same time claim that they had no purposeful contacts with Florida for purposes of a lawsuit arising out of that affiliation. Put in old-fashioned terms, the defendants were "doing business" on a continuing basis in Florida, not as restaurateurs, but as franchisees, and Burger King's lawsuit was for breach of the franchise agreement, not for selling bad hamburgers.\footnote{Id. at 468-69.} There was not much disagreement over this issue among the members of the Court.\footnote{Id. at 487-90 (Stevens, J., dissenting).} Only Justices Stevens and White thought the defendants' contacts were not extensive enough to support jurisdiction.\footnote{Id. at 482-83 (alteration in original) (citation omitted).}

Doctrinally, however, Burger King is a good deal more interesting. The decision not only made a major restatement of the prevailing version of the "minimum contacts" test inherited from Woodson, but added some new, significant elements of its own. Like Woodson, Burger King saw "minimum contacts" as a two-part test, but rather than use the Woodson categories of "inconvenience to the defendant" and "other (i.e., state interest) factors," the Court made the first half of the test an inquiry into the nature of the defendant's contacts with the forum, the actual basis of the Woodson decision,\footnote{Id. at 474-75.} and moved inconvenience to the defendant into the second "other factors" half of the test,\footnote{Id. at 476-77.} along with the state and federal sovereignty factors discussed in Woodson (in Burger King, these will come to be called the "fairness factors").\footnote{Burger King, 471 U.S. at 476-77; see, e.g., Brockman v. Kravic, 779 N.E.2d 1250, 1257 (Ind. Ct. App. 2002); Builder Mart of Am. v. First Union Corp., 563 S.E.2d 352, 355 (S.C. 2002) (describing fairness factors as "fairness prong"). The First Circuit calls them "gestalt factors." Jet Wine & Spirits, Inc. v. Bacardi & Co., 298 F.3d 1, 6 (1st Cir. 2002).} In other words, Burger King reconstituted the test to include both what Woodson said and what it did, and rearranged the various parts of the test to be more in accord with their logical relationships.
In addition to these structural changes, Burger King also added to the substantive content of the standard, sometimes helpfully and sometimes not. Without self-consciously saying it was doing so, the opinion subdivided the idea of defendant contacts into its quantitative and qualitative dimensions. 326 Quantitatively, the Court said, contacts could be either “single or occasional,” “significant,” or enough to “create a substantial connection with the forum,” or a “continuing obligation[]” with its residents. 327 All but the “substantial connection” language (taken from McGee) was uncontroversial, so perhaps it is not surprising that Justice Brennan, writing for the Court, relied on the “substantial connection” language to support jurisdiction over the Burger King defendants. 328 The use of the term “substantial” in this context is confusing principally because “substantial” is the same adjective used in International Shoe to describe the kind of contacts needed to establish general jurisdiction, 329 and since Burger King involved only a question of specific jurisdiction, 330 there was no need to ask whether the defendants’ contacts with Florida were “substantial” in the International Shoe/Perkins sense of the term. In using the term, the Court encouraged lower courts to think of “substantial” contacts as interchangeable with “continuous and systematic” contacts, much as Helicopteros had done, 331 and in so doing, continued the process that eventually would rob the idea of substantial contacts of any precise meaning and in turn lead to the demise of the doctrine of general jurisdiction. 332

In addition to their quantitative dimension, a defendant’s contacts with a forum also had to meet certain qualitative requirements. When a question of specific jurisdiction is involved, said the Court, a defendant’s contacts must give rise to the plaintiff’s claim (the nexus requirement), be purposeful rather than foreseeable, 333 not be “‘random,’ ‘fortuitous,’

327. Burger King, 471 U.S. at 475 & n.18, 476.
328. Id. at 475, 479; see also id. at 487 (Stevens, J., dissenting).
330. See Burger King, 471 U.S. at 464. Following Helicopteros, Burger King uses the terms “specific” and “general” jurisdiction, see id. at 473 n.15, and gives Perkins as its example of general jurisdiction, id. at 473 n.15.
332. The “substantial connection” test is now the most popular way to express the contacts requirement of the specific jurisdiction doctrine. See supra note 56.
333. The Court acknowledged that in the unusual case this purposefulness could be manifest through a stream-of-commerce, or be of a “targeted” or “deliberate” nature, in which fewer direct defendant forum contacts would be necessary. Burger King, 471 U.S. at 472-77.
or ‘attenuated,’” 334 and not be the result of the “‘unilateral activity of another party’” who claims some relationship with the defendant. 335 They also must result in the defendant realizing “‘the benefits and protections of the forum[] [state’s] laws.’” 336 To the extent there are differences among these various phrasings, the requirements were intended to be cumulative. Here, Burger King did not so much change the International Shoe/Woodson standard as summarize it. Each of the above qualifications was a familiar and uncontroversial one, and just another way of expressing some aspect of the idea of purposeful connection with the forum, the central idea in the defendant-veto view. On Burger King’s restatement, once both the quantitative and qualitative requirements of the contacts test are met, so that “a defendant [has] purposefully established minimum contacts within the forum State,” 337 a court then must consider the strength of those contacts in light of the state sovereignty interest and federalism factors identified in Woodson. 338 Here again, the Court added a new feature to the test.

Burger King is the first opinion in which the Court tried to express the idea of “minimum contacts” as a single, integrated standard. Recall that Woodson’s version of “minimum contacts” failed to provide a rule for comparing factors from the first half of the test with factors from the second half. 339 It did not say, for example, how strong a forum state’s interest in providing effective relief for its citizens had to be in order to offset the inconvenience to the defendant of having to defend in the forum. 340 Burger King was the first to provide a preliminary metric for making this comparison. According to the Court, when a plaintiff makes a weaker showing of defendant contacts “than would otherwise be required,” 341 (what the Court called a “lesser showing of minimum contacts,” 342 an incoherent expression if taken literally) 343 state interest

334. Id. at 475 (citation omitted).
335. Id. (quoting Helicopteros, 466 U.S. at 417).
336. Id. at 476.
337. Id. This is an incorrect use of the term “minimum contacts” of course. As coined by International Shoe, the term was a synonym for “constitutionally sufficient contacts,” not “minimal contacts,” or “some” contacts, or even “purposeful” contacts, or any other variation on the idea of defendant connections with a forum. “Minimum contacts” was the label placed on a defendant’s contacts case after all of the analysis (including fairness factors) was done and the defendant either had met the constitutional standard or he had not. The expression was a term of art and not an ordinary language expression.
339. See supra text accompanying notes 148-61.
340. See supra text accompanying notes 148-61.
342. Id.
343. See supra note 337. What the Burger King Court could have had in mind by a “lesser showing of minimum (in the sense of “constitutionally sufficient”) contacts” is
and federalism factors may be used to bolster those weak contacts to permit them to support forum-court jurisdiction.\textsuperscript{344} Conversely, when a defendant who “purposefully has directed his activities at forum residents seeks to defeat jurisdiction, he must present a compelling case that the presence of some other considerations would render jurisdiction unreasonable.”\textsuperscript{345} While far from perfect, these “lesser showing” and “compelling case” rules gave courts a beginning set of tools for comparing defendant contacts with sovereignty concerns to determine whether to take or deny jurisdiction. For example, if a defendant has weak contacts with a forum, but all other considerations support jurisdiction (think of McGee\textsuperscript{346}), then a court may take jurisdiction. On the other hand, if a defendant has extensive purposeful connections with a forum (think of Asahi), but all other considerations cut against jurisdiction (also Asahi), a court may not take jurisdiction. State interest factors can buttress or defeat a jurisdictional claim, in other words, by strengthening a weak contacts case or weakening a strong one, but it is doubtful that they can establish jurisdiction in their own right.\textsuperscript{347} While not an algorithm, this “lesser showing-compelling case” rubric refined the idea of “minimum contacts” received from Woodson, and moved the development of the standard to a higher level.

Other parts of the Court’s discussion also may have added features to the test, though the Court’s casual use of language, and the role of this language in the opinion as a whole, make this more difficult to determine. For example, the Court suggested that federalism concerns triggered by a jurisdictional dispute “usually may be accommodated through means short of finding jurisdiction unconstitutional.”\textsuperscript{348} As examples, it mentioned the use of choice-of-law rules to accommodate

\textsuperscript{344} Burger King, 471 U.S. at 477.
\textsuperscript{345} Id.; see also id. at 477-78 (”[M]inimum requirements inherent in the concept of ‘fair play and substantial justice’ may defeat the reasonableness of jurisdiction even if the defendant has purposefully engaged in forum activities.”).
\textsuperscript{347} Even Justice Stevens’s concurrence in Asahi, which goes as far as any opinion in separating the contacts and sovereignty halves of the test and making each a free-standing standard in its own right, still requires some limited form of defendant contacts with the forum. Id. at 121-22 (Stevens, J., concurring in part and concurring in the judgment). No one on the Court seems willing to do away altogether with the requirement of contacts, at least not explicitly. Keeton and Mullane do it in fact, but not explicitly.
\textsuperscript{348} Burger King, 471 U.S. at 477.
clashes between the “substantive social policies” of different states, and change-of-venue rules to soften the inconvenience to defendants of having to litigate in distant forums.\textsuperscript{349} Taken literally, this seemed to create a presumption in favor of extra-territorial jurisdiction, which a defendant had to overcome with a “contacts-fairness” argument if jurisdiction was to be denied, or looked at another way, to add a “duty to accommodate” federalism concern as a third step in the jurisdictional analysis.\textsuperscript{350} But given the fact that this presumption/duty language appeared only once in the opinion,\textsuperscript{351} that it does not appear elsewhere in the personal jurisdiction case law, and that the Court did not use it in deciding the case,\textsuperscript{352} it is hard to be certain how seriously the Court intended it to be taken. Lower courts do not use the language with any frequency.

Similarly, the Court may have intended to announce a comparative inconvenience test, rather than one focused exclusively on inconvenience to the defendant, in defining the degree of burden needed to satisfy the reasonableness standard in the second half of the “minimum contacts” standard. The Court’s language—that jurisdictional rules may not be employed to make litigation “so gravely difficult and inconvenient that a party unfairly is at a ‘severe disadvantage’ in comparison to his opponent”\textsuperscript{353}—seemed to state a comparative inconvenience test. But since the Due Process Clause is commonly thought to protect only the defendant’s liberty and property interests—the plaintiff’s interests are protected by the right to choose the forum\textsuperscript{354}—it also is hard to know how literally the Court intended this “in comparison” language to be taken.\textsuperscript{355} Other parts of the opinion, those suggesting that jurisdictional rules are different for different types of litigants,\textsuperscript{356} for example, might reinforce the idea of such a differential standard. Jurisdictional rules, the Court said, may not be used against “‘out-of-state consumers to collect

\textsuperscript{349}. Id. For an example of this duty to accommodate in operation, see Spherion Corp. v. Cincinnati Fin. Corp., 183 F. Supp. 2d 1052, 1057 (N.D. Ill. 2002), which used the transfer rule of 28 U.S.C. § 1404(a) to avoid deciding the jurisdictional issue.

\textsuperscript{350}. Burger King, 471 U.S. at 477.

\textsuperscript{351}. Id.

\textsuperscript{352}. Id. at 487.

\textsuperscript{353}. Id. (quoting M/S Bremen v. Zapata Off-Shore Co., 407 U.S. 1, 18 (1972)).

\textsuperscript{354}. E.g., World-Wide Volkswagen Corp. v. Woodson, 444 U.S. 286, 292 (1980).


\textsuperscript{356}. Burger King, 471 U.S. at 486.
payments due on modest personal purchases” when to do so would “render litigation ‘so gravely difficult and inconvenient that [a party] will for all practical purposes be deprived of his day in court,” and the commercial actor will “unfairly [be able] to obtain [a] default judgment[].” (L.L. Bean may not sue me in Freeport if I fail to pay for a pair of socks.) On the other hand, “the Due Process Clause allows flexibility in ensuring that commercial actors are not effectively ‘judgment proof’ for the consequences of obligations they voluntarily assume in other States.” (I may sue L.L. Bean in Baltimore if the socks are torn.) This “default judgment-judgment proof” double-standard for “out-of-state consumers” on the one hand, and “commercial actors” on the other, if that is what it is, is not based on differences in the parties’ “net wealth,” said the Court, but on what would be fair given the parties’ respective connections with, and dealings in, the forum, though it is hard to see how anything other than net wealth could be the defining ingredient of the rule.

The foregoing peculiarities notwithstanding, Burger King is perhaps best known for its exhaustive summary of the personal jurisdiction case law, and for its synthesis of the concepts and terminology of the several generations of jurisdictional thinking into a single, relatively comprehensive test. Comprehensiveness can be cumbersome, and at times the opinion has a kind of dictated-but-not-read quality about it. In recounting the various parts of the test, for example, the Court often

357. Id. at 485 (quoting Burger King Corp. v. Macshara, 724 F.2d 1505, 1515 (11th Cir. 1984), rev’d and remanded sub nom. Burger King Corp. v. Rudzewicz, 471 U.S. 462 (1985)).
358. Id. at 486 (alteration in original) (quoting M/S Bremen, 407 U.S. at 18).
359. Id.
361. L.L. Bean would replace the socks, of course, and the issue would not come up in real life.
362. See Burger King, 471 U.S. at 483 n.25.
363. Id. at 487.
364. Burger King also weighs in on the side of Insurance Corp. of Ireland in the debate over the right of a court to take state sovereignty interests into account in a due process analysis. See id. at 477. The problem arises, one will recall, because the Due Process Clause by its own terms protects the interests of persons, not states, and the Clause is the only limitation on the extra-territorial jurisdictional power of the states. U.S. CONST. amend. XIV, § 1. Woodson stated the protection of sovereignty interests was “express or implicit in both the original scheme of the Constitution and the Fourteenth Amendment,” World-Wide Volkswagen Corp. v. Woodson, 444 U.S. 286, 293 (1980), while Insurance Corp. of Ireland stated that it had to be “a function of the individual liberty interest preserved by the Due Process Clause [because the Clause made] no mention of federalism concerns.” Ins. Corp. of Ir. v. Compagnie des Bauxites de Guinee, 456 U.S. 694, 793 n.10 (1982). Quoting Insurance Corp. of Ireland, Burger King adopts the latter view. Burger King, 471 U.S. at 472 n.13.
describes key concepts more than once, stringing together several
different statements of the same point taken from different cases over
the history of the doctrine for no ostensible purpose other than
seemingly to include every possible way of putting a point.\textsuperscript{365} The
discussion also often loops back on itself, taking up issues that were
disposed of earlier,\textsuperscript{366} so that it sometimes looks a little like the memos of
several law clerks stuck together, end-to-end. But all is not downside in
the Court’s attempt to be inclusive and comprehensive. Single-factor
tests excepted, there is little to be found anywhere in the case law that is
not included in \textit{Burger King} in one form or another. It is as complete
and logically organized a statement and history of the “minimum
contacts” standard as one can find in the Supreme Court case law, and
read carefully, a compendium of just about everything one needs to
know to resolve a jurisdictional dispute. Justice Brennan adds an
idiosyncratic twist every now and then, but usually in the form of a
questionable description of authority more than a misrepresentation of a
doctrinal rule.\textsuperscript{367} For the most part, \textit{Burger King} is a trustworthy
repository of the due process standard.

\textbf{G) A Postscript: Asahi and Burnham}

Two California decisions, \textit{Asahi} and \textit{Burnham v. Superior Court}.\textsuperscript{368}
complete the list of important contributors to the modern “minimum
contacts” standard. \textit{Asahi} is generally thought of as an attempt to refine
the purposefulness requirement of the specific jurisdiction doctrine,
particularly as it applies to commercial actors doing business indirectly in
a state,\textsuperscript{369} and \textit{Burnham} as identifying a major “single-factor test”
qualification on the reach of the “minimum contacts” test generally.\textsuperscript{370}
But each case also says more and less than it seems.

\textit{Asahi} involved the problem of jurisdiction over a component
manufacturer, someone who, by definition, does not do business directly

\begin{footnotes}
\item[365] Burger King, 470 U.S. at 474-76 (describing the “purposefulness” requirement in
three different ways).
\item[366] Id. at 474, 476 (reintroducing foreseeability topic after having read it out of
discussion earlier).
\item[367] See Justice Brennan’s overstatement of \textit{Helicopteros}, id. at 472, his attempt to
revive \textit{McGee}, id. at 474, his one-sided view of \textit{Kulko}, id. at 473-74, his attempts to water
down the defendant veto idea by equating “significant contacts” and contacts that create a
“substantial connection” with the forum with purposeful contacts, id. at 475-76, and his
attempt to reintroduce the idea of foreseeable contacts as sometimes the same as
purposeful ones, after having just acknowledged that \textit{Woodson} made the two mutually
exclusive, id. at 475 n.18.
\item[368] 495 U.S. 604 (1990).
\item[369] E.g., Weintraub, supra note 55, at 538-40.
\item[370] E.g., id. at 551-52.
\end{footnotes}
in a state, but whose products make their way into the state incorporated
into the products of other manufacturers.\textsuperscript{371} The case presented the
difficult question of whether a tort or contract-based contacts standard
was more appropriate for assessing the availability of jurisdiction in such
cases.\textsuperscript{372} The Asahi Metal Company, a Japanese corporation, made
valves for motorcycle tires.\textsuperscript{373} It sold one of its valves to Cheng Shin
Rubber Company, a Taiwanese corporation, which in turn incorporated
the valve into a motorcycle tire it manufactured.\textsuperscript{374} The tire was then
added to a motorcycle purchased by Gary Zurcher.\textsuperscript{375} The tire exploded
while Zurcher was riding the bike, injuring him, and ultimately causing
him to file a products liability action against Cheng Shin (and others).\textsuperscript{376}
Cheng Shin, in turn, cross-complained for indemnity against Asahi.\textsuperscript{377}
Zurcher settled all of his claims against the defendants, leaving only the
indemnity claim between Cheng Shin and Asahi for the court to
decide.\textsuperscript{378} The trial court denied Asahi’s motion to quash service for lack
of personal jurisdiction,\textsuperscript{379} the California Court of Appeal reversed,\textsuperscript{380}
and to complete the straight, the U.S. Supreme Court reversed the California
Supreme Court.\textsuperscript{382}

At first glance, Asahi looks like a garden-variety stream-of-commerce
case, and the lower courts discussed it in those terms.\textsuperscript{383} This was not
surprising since stream-of-commerce was one of the most popular rubrics
at the time for resolving the special jurisdictional problem presented by
the component manufacturer defendant who markets indirectly in a
state. Seen in this light, the key issue in the case, and the one on which
the Court split down the middle, was “whether the mere awareness on
the part of a foreign defendant that the components it manufactured,
sold, and delivered outside the United States would reach the forum
State in the stream of commerce constitutes ‘minimum contacts’ between

\textsuperscript{371} Asahi Metal Indus. Co. v. Superior Court, 480 U.S. 102, 106, 108 (1980) (plurality
opinion).
\textsuperscript{372} See id. at 114-15.
\textsuperscript{373} Id. at 106.
\textsuperscript{374} Id.
\textsuperscript{375} Id.
\textsuperscript{376} Id. at 105-06.
\textsuperscript{377} Id. at 106.
\textsuperscript{378} Id.
\textsuperscript{379} Id. at 106-07.
\textsuperscript{380} Id. at 107. It did this in effect. Literally, it granted a writ of mandate ordering the
trial court to quash service. Id.
\textsuperscript{381} Id. at 108.
\textsuperscript{382} Id.
\textsuperscript{383} Id.
the defendant and the forum State. Put in more familiar terms, the issue was whether a component manufacturer’s forum-contacts must be purposeful for jurisdiction to attach, or whether merely foreseeable contacts are enough. Justices O’Connor and Brennan, each speaking for themselves and three other justices, reached opposite conclusions on this issue, and while Justice Brennan seemed to have the better of the argument (he at least gave reasons for his view), each side was equally adamant. Justice Stevens, writing separately, expressed perhaps the most sophisticated position, arguing that the “line . . . between ‘mere awareness’ that a component will find its way into the forum State and ‘purposeful availment’ of the forum’s market,” often does not exist. If “the volume, the value, and the hazardous character of the components” are great enough, said Justice Stevens, a defendant would be hard put to deny that it had purposefully exploited the market for its product in the state, even if it had done nothing directly in the state to sell the product. One ought to be able to prove purposefulness circumstantially, in other words, in situations where defendants try to have it both ways by doing business in a state, but professing not to.

384. Id. at 105. The Court also repeated the “substantial connection” language of Burger King to describe the test for specific jurisdiction, thereby perpetuating the confusion this particular use of “substantial” causes in distinguishing specific jurisdiction from general jurisdiction. Id. at 112 (plurality opinion).


386. Asahi, 480 U.S. at 108-13 (plurality opinion); id. at 116-17 (Brennan, J., concurring in part and concurring in the judgment).

387. Id. at 116-17 (Brennan, J., concurring in part and concurring in the judgment).

As long as a participant in [the stream of commerce] is aware that the final product is being marketed in the forum State, the possibility of a lawsuit there cannot come as a surprise. Nor will the litigation present a burden for which there is no corresponding benefit. A defendant who has placed goods in the stream of commerce benefits economically from the retail sale of the final product in the forum State, and indirectly benefits from the State’s laws that regulate and facilitate commercial activity.

Id. (Brennan, J., concurring in part and concurring in the judgment). Compare Justice O’Connor’s reason for reaching the opposite conclusion. Id. at 112 (plurality opinion) (“We now find [the purposefulness] position to be consonant with the requirements of due process.”).

388. Id. at 122 (Stevens, J., concurring in part and concurring in the judgment).

389. Id. (Stevens, J., concurring in part and concurring in the judgment).

390. For an example of the converse of this, proving non-purposefulness circumstantially through a paucity of business activity in the forum, see Rodriguez Salgado v. Les Nouvelles Esthetiques, 218 F. Supp. 2d 203, 209 (D.P.R. 2002) (stating that “infinitesimal sales-figures are not enough to constitute the requisite ‘minimum contacts’). See also Noonan v. Winston Co., 135 F.3d 85, 91 (1st Cir. 1998) (“Just as widespread circulation of a publication indicates deliberate action, thin distribution may indicate a lack of purposeful contact.”).
The Court has not yet resolved this purposefulness/foreseeability debate for stream-of-commerce contacts, and lower courts pretty much just choose sides. 391

Looked at in another way, however, Asahi is perhaps not a stream-of-commerce case after all. Asahi’s valve was a commercial product to be sure, but Asahi sold the valve to a tire manufacturer in Taiwan, not a retail valve purchaser in California, and arguably the valve came out of the stream of commerce, much like the Audi automobile in Woodson, at the point of that sale. On this view, once the valve was on the motorcycle tire it was a potentially dangerous instrumentality more than a commercial product (for purposes of suing Asahi), and when it caused harm, the harm was more in the nature of a tort than a breach of contract. 392 Since the valve was manufactured in Japan and caused harm in California, in jurisdictional terms the claim against Asahi was for a multi-state tort, and the traditional “minimum contacts” standard for a multi-state tort is the “effects plus” standard. 393 Rather than ask whether Asahi purposefully marketed its valve in California through a stream of commerce (a doing-business question), therefore, the Court perhaps would have been better off asking if it had produced a tortious effect in the State, and if so, whether it also satisfied one of the “plus” factors typically used in “effects-plus” tests to separate interstate commercial actors from local, intrastate businesses. 394 Had the Court used such a test, it almost certainly would have found Asahi subject to jurisdiction in California, since the company was a major multi-national corporation, and would have satisfied any of the most commonly used “plus” factors. 395 While it is true that the Court looked to a set of quasi “plus”

391. For a list of cases choosing sides, see Bridgeport Music, Inc. v. Still N The Water Publ’g, 327 F.3d 472, 479 (6th Cir. 2003).

392. In this sense, the case was closer to Gray v. American Radiator & Standard Sanitary Corp., 176 N.E.2d 762 (Ill. 1961), than Burger King. Woodson and Keeton also were cases in which the plaintiff’s claim was based in tort and the Court’s discussion of defendant’s contact was framed in contract (i.e., doing business) terms. In Keeton this made sense, since the defendant’s sale of magazines gave rise to a libel, but in Woodson it did not, since the defendants’ sale of an automobile gave rise to a breach of warranty more than a product liability claim (at least against the defendants contesting jurisdiction).


394. Recall that the most common “plus” factors were “derive substantial revenue from interstate commerce,” and “derive revenue from other goods and services consumed in the state.” The California long-arm statute was not an “enumerated acts” statute, however, and thus did not list specific plus factors Asahi would have to satisfy. Instead, it authorized the exercise of jurisdiction “on any basis not inconsistent with the Constitution of this state or of the United States.” CAL. CIV. PROC. CODE § 410.10 (West 2004). As a consequence, it would have been appropriate to use any of the standard plus factors already determined to be constitutionally acceptable.

395. See Weintraub, supra note 55, at 550-51 (arguing that Asahi “would have come out differently” if an effects-based torts standard of personal jurisdiction had been used).
factors in applying the stream-of-commerce standard, it was a different
and more difficult-to-satisfy set of factors than that required for a multi-
state tort. This is an instance, then, in which the failure to keep tort
and contract based formulations of the “minimum contacts” standard
separate not only added to the confusion in the doctrine generally, but
also may have changed the outcome in a particular case.

In the end, however, Asahi is almost certainly more of a “fairness
factors” case than a contacts one. All of the justices but one agreed
that it would have been unfair to make a Japanese company defend
against an indemnity claim of a Taiwanese company in a California state
court, and it was on this basis that the Court decided the case. Going
through Woodson’s list of “other factors” against which a defendant’s
contacts must be weighed, the Court concluded that “these factors . .
clearly reveal[] the unreasonableness of the assertion of jurisdiction over
Asahi, even apart from the question of the placement of goods in the
stream of commerce.” Put in Burger King language, the Court said, in
effect, that Asahi had made a “compelling case that the presence of some
other considerations . . . render[ed] jurisdiction unreasonable.” The
implications of this conclusion are substantial. Among other things, it
means that a defendant’s forum contacts do not need to be considered in
making the decision to deny personal jurisdiction.

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396. The “additional conduct” required to show that Asahi’s contact with California
was purposeful included
designing the product [i.e., the valve] for the market in the forum State,
advertising in the forum State, establishing channels for providing regular advice
to customers in the forum State, or marketing the product through a distributor
who has agreed to serve as the sales agent in the forum State.

397. Justice Scalia would have held that the lack of purposeful stream-of-commerce
contacts, by itself, was enough to defeat jurisdiction, Asahi, 480 U.S. at 112-13, and that it
was not necessary to consider any of the sovereignty factors in the second half of the
Burger King test, id. at 105.

398. Id. at 115 (noting that it was not clear what law governed the indemnity action).
California law might have governed, but apart from this possibility, there was nothing in
the case that had anything to do with California. Id.

399. Id. at 116. Eight justices agreed with part II-B of the opinion expressing this
conclusion. Id. at 105. No more than four justices agreed with any other part of the
opinion. See id.

400. Id. at 114.


402. See Asahi, 480 U.S. at 116.

403. See id. at 113-14.
The Court treated the contacts and fairness-factors halves of the “minimum contacts” standard as two separate tests in other words, and not as a single, two-part test, at least for purposes of denying jurisdiction. Justice Stevens was the most explicit in this regard. “An examination of minimum contacts,” he said, “is not always necessary to determine whether a state court’s assertion of personal jurisdiction is constitutional.” A majority of the Court has never said this, though Justice Stevens thought Justice Brennan’s rendition of the “minimum contacts” standard in Burger King supported this view. While Asahi’s influence has been limited mostly to stream-of-commerce cases, its potential implications are more far-reaching. The absence of a majority opinion is the only thing that keeps it from being a major doctrinal decision.

Burnham is an important case, not so much for what it adds to the “minimum contacts” standard—it was about “transient” or what also is called “tag” jurisdiction—but for how it summarizes that standard and describes its relationship to “single-factor” jurisdictional tests. Factually, the case looked a lot like Kulko, with divorce rather than child support the principal issue in dispute. The Burnhams were married in West Virginia and lived together in New Jersey for ten years before deciding

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404. See id.
405. Id. at 121 (Stevens, J., concurring in part and concurring in the judgment) (citing Burger King, 471 U.S. at 476-78). This is another example of failing to treat the “minimum contacts” expression as a term of art. Understood as a synonym for constitutionally sufficient contacts, which is how International Shoe used the term, it would be incoherent to say, as Justice Stevens in effect does, that examining the constitutional sufficiency of the defendant’s contacts is not always necessary in determining whether the assertion of jurisdiction over the defendant is constitutional. Id. (Stevens, J., concurring in part and concuring in the judgment). What he probably meant to say is that an examination of the defendant’s connections with the forum is not always necessary in determining whether the assertion of jurisdiction is constitutional. In his concurrence in the judgment in Insurance Corp. of Ireland, Justice Powell predicted that the fairness factors half of the minimum contacts standard eventually would become a free-standing test in its own right, and that a defendant’s forum contacts would become an optional feature of the standard. See Ins. Corp. of Ir. v. Compagnie des Bauxites de Guinee, 456 U.S. 694, 713-14 (1982) (Powell, J., concurring in the judgment). The prediction has come true, at least for Justice Stevens, and also probably for Justice Brennan.
406. See Asahi, 480 U.S. at 121 (Stevens, J., concurring in part and concurring in the judgment). Justice Brennan first expressed the view in his concurrence in Keeton, where he argued that state interest concerns were not part of the due process analysis needed to determine personal jurisdiction. See Keeton v. Hustler Magazine, Inc., 465 U.S. 770, 782 (1984) (Brennan, J., concurring in the judgment).
408. Id. at 607-08.
to separate. Mrs. Burnham moved to California with the couple's two children where, it was agreed, she would file for divorce on the ground of irreconcilable differences. At some point, Mr. Burnham changed his mind about the California proceeding and filed a divorce action of his own in New Jersey, alleging that Mrs. Burnham had deserted him. Unable to convince Mr. Burnham to abide by their agreement, Mrs. Burnham filed her own divorce action in California. She served Mr. Burnham with process while he was in California on a business trip, after he returned their oldest child to her following a weekend trip to San Francisco. Mr. Burnham contested jurisdiction, arguing that "his only contacts with California were a few short visits to the State for the purposes of conducting business and visiting his children," and that none of these contacts had given rise to Mrs. Burnham's divorce claim. But the trial court denied his motion to quash, and the state appellate court denied mandamus relief. The Supreme Court affirmed.

The Court could have sustained jurisdiction over Mr. Burnham on a number of different grounds—all of the justices agreed that jurisdiction was available—including a "minimum contacts" analysis, but instead it
chose the simplest and most controversial rationale. It held that personal service on Mr. Burnham in California made it unnecessary to examine the extent of his contacts with the State, or the relationship of those contacts to Mrs. Burnham’s divorce action.420 “The short of the matter,” said Justice Scalia speaking for the Court, “is that jurisdiction based on physical presence alone constitutes due process because it is one of the continuing traditions of our legal system that define the due process standard of ‘traditional notions of fair play and substantial justice.’”421 This conclusion was controversial principally because the Court had said several years earlier, in Shaffer, that “all assertions of state-court jurisdiction must be evaluated according to the standards set forth in International Shoe and its progeny,”422 and this seemed to require a “minimum contacts” analysis for “all” types of jurisdictional issues. But the plurality opinion for the Court in Burnham disagreed. Relying on a close reading of Shaffer, and an extended examination of the English and American origins of the personal jurisdiction doctrine, it limited Shaffer’s particular holding to what used to be called the “attachment” version of

acCORDANCE with its own very different laws on the subject (depending upon how it resolves the choice of laws questions involved), when neither of the parties bargained for that in entering the marriage? Fairness is not a concern for Justice Scalia when the defendant is served in the state, id. at 639 n.14 (Brennan, J., concurring in the judgment), but why none of the other justices were troubled by these issues is confusing. Perhaps they were upset at Mr. Burnham for reneging on his agreement to let Mrs. Burnham file in California, or perhaps they thought he had no one but himself to blame for getting served in California, since there was no evidence that he had been induced into the State by force or fraud. See id. at 608.

420. Id. at 619 (plurality opinion).
421. Id. (plurality opinion).
422. Shaffer v. Heitner, 433 U.S. 186, 212 (1977). There are other concerns one might have about justifying a rule principally on the basis of tradition without any concern for whether it is fair in contemporary terms. Burnham 495 U.S. at 621 (plurality opinion) (“[Tag jurisdiction’s] validation is its pedigree.”). Tradition is just another time period’s definition of fairness, for example, not a timeless notion handed down from on high, and there is no more reason to fossilize another era’s policy judgment in a jurisdictional standard than there is in any other area of the law. Even “traditional notions,” as the Court acknowledges, “can be . . . offended by the perpetuation of ancient forms that are no longer justified.” Id. 621-22 (plurality opinion). Moreover, if Shaffer could reject the traditional distinction between quasi in rem and in personam jurisdiction, id. at 621 (plurality opinion), for example, (and Burnham makes it clear that this much of Shaffer is still good law), id. (plurality opinion), why could Burnham not reject the traditional distinction between “tag” and “minimum contacts” jurisdiction? If the answer is that tradition is an objective standard of legitimacy, and fairness is a subjective one, what evidence is there that this is so? A conception of fairness used to justify a judicial decision must be found in the due process case law, not the personal preferences of the individual justices, and arguments about the content of a tradition are hardly easy or uncontroversial. Burnham itself is proof of this. The Court’s opinion is also fuzzy on how it would handle the force and fraud objections to a tag rule.
quasi in rem jurisdiction, 423 and concluded that Shaffer's more general language announced a rule for "jurisdiction over an absent defendant," not a defendant physically present in the forum. 424 Shaffer, like International Shoe, Justice Scalia asserted, was a rule for novel (i.e., post Due Process Clause) forms of jurisdiction, not traditional ones. 425

While Burnham is a "minimum contacts" case in only an indirect sense, its summary of that standard repeated some familiar mistakes. For example, while professing to "express no view[]" on the matter, it described the "special rule" for general jurisdiction as requiring only "continuous and systematic" rather than "substantial" contacts with a forum. 426 It based this description on International Shoe, which admittedly used both terms but not as synonyms, rather than on Perkins, but the mistake is the same no matter the source. 427 The mistake was harmless in Burnham itself, since the decision rested on Mr. Burnham's being "tagged" in California, and not on his contacts with the States, 428 but as the last major Supreme Court pronouncement on the matter, Burnham is a favorite citation for lower courts looking for a statement of the personal (specific and general) jurisdiction standard, and it does not help that it continues to get half of that standard wrong. 429

It is also surprising that Burnham did not make more use of Kulko. The two cases were close factually and implicated many of the same policy concerns, yet there is only one "cf." reference to Kulko in the Burnham opinion, and it was used simply to illustrate a factual point rather than support a legal conclusion. 430 Mr. Kulko had more extensive contacts with California than Mr. Burnham, and yet he was not subject to jurisdiction in the State because the Court was not willing to construe the "minimum contacts" standard so as to "discourage parents from entering
into reasonable visitation agreements." When Mr. Burnham, acting as a good father, visited one of his children, however, the result was different. Why the same concern for “family harmony” did not play a similar role in his case was not explained. The Court may have been trying to signal, by omission, that substantive law policies cannot be used to shape the content of jurisdictional rules. This had always been its espoused view until Mullane, Keeton, and Kulko suggested otherwise, and perhaps the Court was returning to traditional values in more than one way.

Justice Brennan’s concurring opinion in Burnham contains what is perhaps the most aggressive statement of the totality-of-the-circumstances test for “minimum contacts” jurisdiction to be found anywhere in the case law. Building on Justice Black’s “transformation of our national economy” opinion in McGee, his own “foreseeable contacts” dissent in Woodson, and his hybrid opinion for the Court in Burger King, Justice Brennan blended together an odd mixture of arguments based on “tradition,” “reasonable expectations,” “benefits and protections of [the] laws,” and “lack of inconvenience,” to conclude that “as a rule the exercise of personal jurisdiction over a defendant based on his voluntary presence in the forum will satisfy the requirements of due process.”

He did not disagree that California had jurisdiction over Mr. Burnham, he objected only to what he characterized as Justice Scalia’s view that “traditional rules of jurisdiction [were], ipso facto, forever constitutional.” He thought an inquiry into the fairness of taking jurisdiction was always necessary, even when traditional rules were involved.

In many ways, Justice Brennan’s opinion consisted of adding up zeros to get one. For example, he argued that Mr. Burnham should have expected to be subject to jurisdiction in California if he was served there, because that is “our common understanding now, [of what is reasonable,]
fortified by a century of judicial practice.\textsuperscript{440} “If I visit another State,” he continued, “I knowingly assume some risk that the State will exercise its power over my property or my person while there.”\textsuperscript{441} The strength of this argument, however, is the traditional rule, based on “a century of judicial practice, . . . that jurisdiction is often a function of geography,”\textsuperscript{442} as Justice Brennan put it, and not the fact that a defendant should expect such a rule to be enforced.\textsuperscript{443} “Justice Brennan’s long journey is a circular one,” said Justice Scalia, “leaving him, at the end of the day, in complete reliance upon the very factor he sought to avoid: The existence of a continuing tradition is not enough, fairness also must be considered; fairness exists here because there is a continuing tradition.”\textsuperscript{444} Ironically, it was Justice Brennan himself who first pointed out the circularity of the “reasonable expectations” argument in his Woodson dissent.\textsuperscript{445}

The argument based on the benefits and protections of California law is equally unavailing. In the three days he was in California prior to being served, Mr. Burnham traveled on California’s “roads and waterways,” had his “health and safety . . . guaranteed by the State’s police, fire, and emergency medical services[,] . . . enjoyed the fruits of the State’s economy,” and had the “right of access to [the State’s] courts.”\textsuperscript{446} With these benefits, Justice Brennan argued, came the corollary burden of having to answer to a claim by a California citizen in a California court.\textsuperscript{447} A part from the fact, as Justice Scalia pointed out, that three days worth of such benefits seems “powerfully inadequate to establish . . . that it is ‘fair’ for California to decree the ownership of all Mr. Burnham’s worldly goods acquired during the [ten] years of his marriage, and the custody over his children,”\textsuperscript{448} the benefits and protections in question had nothing to do with Mrs. Burnham’s divorce claim, and this was a crucial omission.\textsuperscript{449} The expression “benefits and protections of the law” is not a free-standing test. It comes originally

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{440} Id. at 637 (Brennan, J., concurring in the judgment).
\item \textsuperscript{441} Id. (Stevens, J., concurring in the judgment) (quoting Shaffer v. Heitner, 433 U.S. 186, 218 (1977)).
\item \textsuperscript{442} Id. (Brennan, J., concurring in the judgment).
\item \textsuperscript{443} Id. (Brennan, J., concurring in the judgment).
\item \textsuperscript{444} Id. at 625 (plurality opinion).
\item \textsuperscript{445} World-Wide Volkswagen Corp. v. Woodson, 444 U.S. 286, 311 n.18 (1980) (Brennan, J., dissenting) (“The Court suggests that [it is critical that the defendant should reasonably anticipate being haled into court in the forum] but [this] reasoning begs the question. A defendant cannot know if his actions will subject him to jurisdiction in another State until we have declared what the law of jurisdiction is.”).
\item \textsuperscript{446} Burnham, 495 U.S. at 637-38 (Brennan, J., concurring in the judgment).
\item \textsuperscript{447} Id. at 637-39 (Brennan, J., concurring in the judgment).
\item \textsuperscript{448} Id. at 623 (plurality opinion).
\item \textsuperscript{449} Id. at 607-08 (plurality opinion).
\end{itemize}
from the specific jurisdiction requirement that a defendant “purposefully avail[ed] itself of the privilege of conducting activities within the forum State, thus invoking the benefits and protections of its laws.”\textsuperscript{450} It is purposeful activity in the state that is the key jurisdictional feature in this statement of the test, not the benefits and protections of the state’s law, and the relevant benefits and protections are only those flowing from that purposeful in-state activity. People who never enter a state can benefit from the protection of its laws, and yet that is not a basis for the state taking jurisdiction over them. Any other rule would create a new, all-encompassing category of general jurisdiction based on forum-provided benefits and protections, and in the process would make the doctrine of specific jurisdiction obsolete.

Justice Brennan’s final argument also harkened back to McGee. The potential burdens on a transient defendant such as Mr. Burnham are slight, he argued, because “‘[m]odern transportation and communications have made it much less burdensome for a party sued to defend himself’ in a State outside his place of residence.”\textsuperscript{451} The fact that Mr. Burnham had journeyed to California at least once before, said Justice Brennan, also was “an indication that suit in the forum likely would not be prohibitively inconvenient.”\textsuperscript{452} The problem with this argument, of course, as Justice Scalia pointed out, is that it justifies “jurisdiction over everyone, whether or not he ever comes to California.”\textsuperscript{453} It would extend the reach of a state’s extra-territorial jurisdictional to the point where it would be almost limitless. On Justice Brennan’s view, it is hard to know what kind of claim Mr. Burnham could not be sued on in California, or who could not be sued in California.\textsuperscript{454}

\textbf{H) The Errors Collected and Augmented}

Burnham brings to an end the string of Supreme Court cases principally responsible for defining the content of the modern personal jurisdiction doctrine, and like Dorothy and her companions, the doctrine


\textsuperscript{452} Id. at 638-39 (Brennan, J., concurring in the judgment).

\textsuperscript{453} Id. at 624 (plurality opinion).

\textsuperscript{454} Interestingly, Justice Brennan does not discuss the role of state sovereignty concerns in the decision to take jurisdiction. West Virginia, where the Burnhams were married, and New Jersey, where they acquired their joint property, id. at 607, would seem to have some interest in the case, particularly given the fact that they do not have a system of community property, unlike California.
has now come a long way from Kansas (or Missouri). What started as an uncomplicated two-factor, four-permutation test, designed to deal with the relatively simple telephone-and-automobile-connected world of the 1950s, has grown exponentially into an elaborate, multi-factor, pseudo algorithmic, balancing test, designed to deal with the electronically linked world of the twenty-first century. Unfortunately, the development of the doctrine has not always been linear, cumulative, consistent, or clear. In now more than half a century, the Court’s efforts through different authors455 to adjust the doctrine to changing times, circumstances, and views has produced as many contradictions, dead-ends, opacities, and mistakes as it has intellectual breakthroughs and doctrinal epiphanies. And lower court judges have compounded the problem by taking advantage of the doors left open by the Court to add additional layers of confusion of their own.

The difficulties with the doctrine are now well-known. By using the two terms interchangeably and indiscriminately, the Court has muddied International Shoe's relatively clear distinction between “continuous and systematic” contacts needed for specific jurisdiction, and “substantial” contacts needed for general jurisdiction,456 thereby undercutting, if not destroying, the idea of “substantial” contacts as a separate and distinct jurisdictional standard (e.g., McGee, Keeton, Calder, Helicopteros and Burger King). This, in turn, has so watered down the corollary doctrine of “general” jurisdiction that it is now often easier to satisfy its requirements than it is to satisfy the requirements of what was intended to be the less restrictive rule of specific jurisdiction.457 The Court also

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455. The Court seems to have had difficulty over the years finding a justice whose way of expressing the personal jurisdiction standard represents a consensus view. Even during the activist period of the early 1980s, when the makeup of the Court did not change from one term to the next, no justice wrote two personal jurisdiction opinions in a row (with the exception of Justice Rehnquist, who wrote Keeton and Calder, since the two cases were argued and decided together), and few wrote more than one at all. It was as if no one ever passed the audition for getting the standard right. Shifting the opinion-writing assignment around like this created a little bit of a “pride-of-authorship” problem, however, in the sense that each justice, paraphrasing the received standard in her or his own way, changed it ever so slightly in the process, and introduced a layer of ambiguity or imprecision that lower court judges exploited to loosen the standard even further. The overall cycle is a variation on the telephone game problem.

456. The Court has even failed to use the term “minimum contacts” in a consistent fashion, sometimes substituting “minimal” for “minimum,” for example, so as to require only a few contacts with the forum, rather than constitutionally sufficient contacts. E.g., Hanson v. Denckla, 357 U.S. 235, 251 (1958).

457. For a brief time, it even looked like the Court wanted to eliminate general jurisdiction explicitly, as when Shaffer described the “minimum contacts” standard as requiring a three-part relationship among the defendant, the claim, and the forum. Shaffer v. Heitner, 433 U.S. 186, 204 (1977). Subsequent opinions of the Court used this formulation of the test, although in situations where only specific jurisdiction was
has stated the “purposefulness” requirement for defendant forum contacts in such a wide variety of ways (e.g., “stream-of-commerce” in Woodson and Asahi,\footnote{458} targeting, “intentionally direct[ing],” “expressly aim[ing],” and “causing the effects” in Calder,\footnote{459} “reasonably anticipate being haled into court” in Woodson,\footnote{460} and exercise the “privilege of conducting activities” in Hanson\footnote{461}), that there is now a purposefulness argument for just about every situation, and what was once the bulwark of the defendant-veto view of personal jurisdiction is now more often than not just a minor obstacle in the path of a totality-of-the-circumstances argument. By using these various formulations of purposefulness interchangeably, the Court also has failed to maintain the historical distinction between contract (“doing business”) and tort (“effects,” “effects plus”) based versions of the “minimum contacts” standard, a distinction codified in the long-arm statutes of many states,\footnote{462} and this in turn has created unnecessary interpretive difficulties for courts applying those statutes.

In addition, by suggesting that the “minimum contacts” test is not as strict for individual consumers suing large corporations about modest personal purchases as it is for corporations suing consumers in return, the Court has introduced (and denied that it has introduced at the same time) the possibility of a wealth-based double-standard into due process analysis, and wealth-based double-standards are difficult to reconcile with “traditional notions of fair play and substantial justice.”\footnote{463} Such standards also license result-oriented lower court judges to take a Robin-

Hood perspective on jurisdictional questions and to “do the right thing” no matter the cost in doctrinal clarity or predictability, though so far, few lower courts seem to have exercised this option. Further, by refusing to resolve (in Helicopteros) the “arise out of/related to” debate over the meaning of the nexus requirement in the doctrine of specific jurisdiction, the Court has left lower courts free to pick and choose between the two definitions, producing a pattern of uneven and inconsistent results from state to state. In one sense, it is not even clear that a contacts requirement remains a part of the due process standard at all. The Court has suggested, and sometimes said explicitly, that defendant forum contacts and state sovereignty interests are independent and separate jurisdictional standards, each capable of authorizing or denying jurisdiction in its own right (e.g., Asahi, Keeton, Mullane). And yet, at other times, it has described these different types of considerations as two halves of a single test, both of which are necessary for a complete “minimum contacts” analysis (e.g., Woodson, Kulko, Burger King). Again, lower courts left free to choose, do so unevenly.

Compounding this problem is the difficulty of explaining how a constitutional analysis grounded in the Due Process Clause can authorize the consideration of state sovereignty interests at all. The Court has tried to explain how this is justified several different times, only to repudiate each explanation the next time it revisits the issue (e.g., Pennoyer, International Shoe, Woodson, Insurance Corp. of Ireland, Burger King).

Moreover, the Court’s decision to drop (or just stop using) International Shoe’s “nature and quality and . . . circumstances” rubric for analyzing specific jurisdiction cases involving single and isolated

464. But see CompuServe, Inc. v. Patterson, 89 F.3d 1257, 1268 (6th Cir. 1996) (basing decision on the fact that plaintiff did not bring “suit in Ohio ‘to collect a small amount of user fees from a Texas resident who, while seated at his computer terminal, became a member of the CompuServe network.’ [Plaintiff was] an entrepreneur who purposefully employed CompuServe to market his computer software product.”); Zippo Mfg. Co. v. Zippo Dot Com, Inc., 952 F. Supp. 1119, 1125 (W.D. Pa. 1997) (“When a consumer logs onto a server in a foreign jurisdiction he is engaging in a fundamentally different type of contact than an entity that is using the Internet to sell or market products or services to residents of foreign jurisdictions.”).


466. The Court’s confused views on this topic have not proved as troublesome to lower courts. Most lower courts miss this legitimacy problem altogether, and those that see it seem more concerned about the practical political consequences of their decisions than concerns of doctrinal integrity.

contacts giving rise to the claim has created a conceptual rift between International Shoe and later single-contact cases (e.g., Woodson), making it that much easier for lower courts to stretch (and shrink) this category of specific jurisdiction well beyond its original shape. The failure to retain International Shoe’s language also has denied the Court what might have been a better analytical framework for evaluating fairness and justice considerations in single-contact cases. In addition, in describing the type of inconvenience relevant to the reasonableness determination in the “other (or fairness) factors” half of the “minimum contacts” test, the Court has said one thing and done another, both restricting such analysis to defendant inconvenience, while at the same time saying that the comparative inconvenience of both plaintiff and defendant may be taken into account (Burger King). And finally, while insisting that questions of substantive law should be kept separate from questions of jurisdictional power, the Court has used substantive law policies to modify jurisdictional rules when it wanted to, and ignored them when it did not want to, without acknowledging that it was doing this (Mullane, Keeton, Kulko), again both confusing lower court judges and implicitly authorizing them to freelance in the same way on their own.

The “minimum contacts” standard is a constitutional doctrine, and one of the strengths of a constitutional doctrine is its ability to adapt to changing conditions and views, the laments of textualist interpreters (both old and new) to the contrary notwithstanding. This is even more the case when the doctrine is grounded in an idea as malleable and context-specific as that of “fair play and substantial justice.” So a certain amount of change in the content of the “minimum contacts”

468. For examples of self-described purposefulness cases that might have been better discussed in terms of the nature, quality, and circumstances of the defendant’s forum contacts, see Rodriguez Salgado v. Les Nouvelles Esthetiques, 218 F. Supp. 2d 203, 208 (D.P.R. 2002), and SGI Air Holding II LLC v. Novartis Intl’l AG, 192 F. Supp. 2d 1195, 1202 (D. Colo. 2002). For cases that do a “nature, quality, and circumstances” analysis in effect, but do not call it that, see Quality Pork International v. Rupari Food Servs., Inc., 675 N.W.2d 642, 649-51 (Neb. 2004), and Wenger Tree Service v. Royal Truck & Equipment, Inc., 853 So.2d 888, 896 (Ala. 2002). For cases calling it that, see Lang v. Capital Resource Investment, 102 S.W.3d 861, 865-66 (Tex. 2003), and Plant Mechanical Services, Inc. v. Drivecon Corp., No. CIV. A. 01-0993, 2001 WL 1002413, at *2 (E.D. La. Aug. 23, 2001).

469. See Burger King Corp. v. Rudzewicz, 471 U.S. 462, 483-84 (1985).

470. William Eskridge is usually given credit for identifying the difference between new and old forms of the textualist interpretive method, focusing principally on the different role each approach accords enactment-history materials in the determination of constitutional and legislative intent. See William N. Eskridge, Jr., The New Textualism, 37 UCLA L. Rev. 621, 626-56 (1990).

471. Int’l Shoe, 326 U.S. at 316.
standard could have been expected (and even welcomed) over time, and if all the Court had done was keep the standard current there would be little if anything to get excited about. But the problems with the Court’s development of the standard run well beyond those built into the process of trying to stay doctrinally up to date. The Court’s personal jurisdiction decisions over the past half-century have been characterized more by a lack of analytical discipline than a ready willingness to change with the times. The inconsistencies, contradictions, and confusions introduced into the doctrine are often not so much the unavoidable consequences of inevitable change as the results of poor research, careless analysis, pride of authorship, and competing agendas. The Court has not done a good job, as an institution, of seeing to it that the doctrine has grown in coherent and consistent ways, and this pattern has not been lost on lower court judges charged with implementing the Court’s vision.

Like children imitating the mannerisms of their parents, lower court judges “don’t take after strangers.”\(^{472}\) Often, they mimic and sometimes even improve upon the Court’s errors, sometimes in exaggerated fashion, to create their own peculiar forms of doctrinal incoherence. For example, the overwhelming preponderance of lower federal and state courts adopt Helicopteros’s “continuous and systematic” phrasing of the contacts requirement for general jurisdiction, rather than the “substantial” contacts test first articulated in International Shoe, and repeated in Perkins.\(^{473}\) “Continuous and systematic” contacts need only be regular, however, not substantial, so it is not surprising that lower courts often find general jurisdiction present when a defendant has engaged in just about any kind of regular business in a state, no matter

\(^{472}\) I heard Wordsworth’s dictum expressed this way at a little league baseball game, when the son of a particularly irascible coach threw a tantrum after striking out. The person sitting next to me on the bleachers leaned over and said very matter-of-factly, “You know, they don’t take after strangers.” For the original, see WILLIAM WORDSWORTH, My Heart Leaps Up When I Behold, in WILLIAM WORDSWORTH: THE MAJOR WORKS 246 (Stephen Gill ed. 2000) (“My heart leaps up when I behold A Rainbow in the sky: So was it when my life began; So is it now I am a Man; So be it when I shall grow old, Or let me die! The Child is Father of the Man; I could wish my days to be Bound each to each by natural piety.” (emphasis added)). The dictum is only partly correct, of course. See WILLARD GAYLIN, HATRED 158 (2003) (explaining how children identify with and model their behavior after both parents and “other idealized figures”).

\(^{473}\) E.g., Bird v. Parsons, 289 F.3d 865, 873 (6th Cir. 2002) (“General jurisdiction is proper only where ‘a defendant’s contacts with the forum state are of such a continuous and systematic nature that the state may exercise personal jurisdiction over the defendant even if the action is unrelated to the defendant’s contacts with the state.”’ (citation omitted)); Adams v. Riverview Healthcare Ass’n, No. A3-02-135, 2003 U.S. Dist. LEXIS 4253, at *5 (D.N.D. Mar. 17, 2003); Hunter v. Mendoza, 197 F. Supp. 2d 964, 969 (N.D. Ohio 2002); Am. Type Culture Collection, Inc. v. Coleman, 83 S.W.3d 801, 807 (Tex. 2002) (“General jurisdiction is present when a defendant’s contacts with a forum are ‘continuous and systematic . . . .’” (citation omitted)).
how minimal. The ultimate effect of this misunderstanding is to make the mainstream tests for specific jurisdiction ("doing business") the principal test for general jurisdiction as well, and to permit plaintiffs to sue defendants who do any kind of business in a state on any claim, whether connected to that business or not.

In one sense, of course, this is an understandable mistake. Helicopteros was a general jurisdiction case; it used the adjectives "continuous and systematic" to describe the type of contacts required for general jurisdiction, and it is the latest in time of the Court's major discussions of general jurisdiction. But a careful reading of the decision also reveals that the defendant helicopter company had continuous and systematic business contacts with Texas in the ordinary sense of those terms, and yet those contacts were not enough for the Texas court to take general jurisdiction over it. Something more than merely "doing business" in a state is needed if a company is to be required to defend there against a claim arising in another state or country. This notwithstanding, many lower courts now treat Helicopteros as authority for the proposition that doing business in a state is enough to support general jurisdiction.


475. See Twitchell, supra note 1, at 173-79 (describing how commentators extract a "doing business" standard from Supreme Court case law on general jurisdiction).

476. Burger King, Asahi, and Burnham post-date Helicopteros and repeat its description of the general jurisdiction standard, but they do not add anything to it.

477. See, e.g., Gorman, F.3d at 509-10. But see, e.g., Bird, 289 F.3d at 874 (stating that doing business with state residents "does not permit general jurisdiction"); Behagen v. Amateur Basketball Ass'n of the United States, 744 F.2d 731, 733 (10th Cir. 1984)
Related to this error, since it affects the frequency with which lower courts turn to the general jurisdiction doctrine, the practice of defining the “nexus” requirement of specific jurisdiction in either “arise out of” or “related to” terms. Many lower courts treat these alternative definitions as equally acceptable, and act as if they are free to choose between them without having to justify the choice. Some courts seem

478. Courts routinely discuss both general and specific jurisdiction in all cases, as if they were “paired in the voting.” Perhaps this is because lawyers routinely argue for both types of jurisdiction, whether warranted or not.

479. See, e.g., Bird, 289 F.3d at 875 (stating that the nexus requirement “‘does not require that the cause of action formally ‘arise from’ defendant’s contacts with the forum; rather, this criterion requires only ‘that the cause of action, of whatever type, have a substantial connection with the defendant’s in-state activities’” (quoting Third Nat’l Bank in Nashville v. WEDGE Group, Inc., 882 F.2d 1087, 1091 (6th Cir. 1989) (quoting S. Mach. Co. v. Mohasco Indus., Inc., 401 F.2d 374, 384 n.27 (1968)))); Panavision Int’l, L.P. v. Toeppen, 141 F.3d 1316, 1322 (9th Cir. 1998) (“We must determine if the plaintiff . . . would not have been injured ‘but for’ the defendant’s . . . conduct directed toward [plaintiff] in California”); Sawtelle v. Farrell, 70 F.3d 1381, 1389 (1st Cir. 1995) (“[T]he relatedness requirement is not met merely because a plaintiff’s cause of action arose out of the general relationship between the parties; rather, the action must directly arise out of the specific contacts between the defendant and the forum state.”); Adams v. Riverview Healthcare Ass’n, No. A 3-02-135, 2003 U.S. Dist. LEXIS 4253, at *8-9 (D.N.D. Mar. 17, 2003) (“providing healthcare to patients in North Dakota [which did not] commence until after [plaintiff’s] termination” from defendant company was “not related to or connected with [plaintiff’s] cause of action” for wrongful termination); Mulcahy v. Cheetah Learning LLC, No. CIV.02-791 (PA M/RLE), 2002 U.S. Dist. LEXIS 17516, at *3-4 (D. Minn. Sept. 4, 2002) (holding that claim for copyright infringement of test-preparation course materials related to advertising and selling seats to test-preparation course in forum state,
to think Helicopteros stands for this proposition, probably because it used both expressions to describe the idea of nexus, notwithstanding that the question of how to define nexus was explicitly taken out of that case by the parties. Other courts seem to prefer the freedom to define nexus in more than one way because they like having the flexibility to take jurisdiction in circumstances where they think it would be wise to do so, and to decline it when they think it would not, and a “related to” standard has more play in the joints than its “arise out of” alternative. Whatever the reason, interpreting International Shoe as articulating two equally acceptable definitions of nexus is an implausible reading of the case on both linguistic and policy grounds. Linguistically, if the Court meant to require only a “related to” relationship between the defendant’s forum-contacts and the plaintiff’s claim, there would have been no need for it to use the expression “arise out of”—“arise out of” is simply a lesser included category of “related to”—and presumably everything said in the opinion was intended to be given effect. But more importantly, requiring only “some significant relationship” between the defendant’s contacts and the plaintiff’s claim undercuts the defendant-veto policy that historically has been the animating force behind the “minimum contacts” standard. It is much harder for a defendant, particularly a corporate defendant of any size and with more

480. E.g., Carrot Bunch Co. v. Computer Friends, Inc., 218 F. Supp. 2d 820, 824 (N.D. Tex. 2002) (“[S]pecific jurisdiction . . . permits the exercise of personal jurisdiction over a nonresident defendant only when the nonresident defendant’s contacts with the forum state arise from, or are directly related to, the cause of action.” (citing Helicopteros Nacionales de Colombia, S. A. v. Hall, 466 U.S. 408, 414 n.8 (1984))).

481. See Helicopteros, 466 U.S. at 415 n.10. If the Court thought nexus required only a “related to” relationship between claim and contacts Helicopteros should have been decided differently, the parties’ error in not arguing the issue notwithstanding, and yet there is no indication in the opinion that the Court was dissatisfied with the outcome.

than one kind of product or service, to avoid contact of any kind with a forum, than it is for it to avoid doing a particular kind of business there, and yet under a “related to” conception of nexus only the first option is available if the defendant wants to exercise its veto right. It almost seems as if lower courts do not believe the Supreme Court when it repeatedly reasserts the primacy of the defendant’s right to control the jurisdictional issue, or if they believe the Court, they do not accept its decision.483

Most lower courts also repeat the Court’s post-International Shoe habit of not using the term “minimum contacts” as a term of art, regularly finding “minimum contacts” present (or absent), before completing their jurisdictional analysis.484 Such a conclusion would have been a contradiction in terms under International Shoe’s original formulation of the due process standard, where “minimum contacts” was a synonym for

483. Combining an expansive definition of both nexus and general jurisdiction, many lower courts treat specific jurisdiction as a doctrine for dealing with only single-contact cases, and reserve general jurisdiction for cases involving multiple contacts of any frequency and regularity. See, e.g., Brockman v. Kravic, 779 N.E.2d 1250, 1256-57 (Ind. Ct. App. 2002) (“[T]he defendant’s isolated contacts with a state that are not enough to establish general personal jurisdiction may be sufficient to allow jurisdiction over any incidents related to those contacts”). The effect of this decision is to move the jurisdiction/no-jurisdiction line on the contacts spectrum (defined by no contacts at one end and substantial contacts at the other), an order of magnitude in the direction of the taking-jurisdiction end of the spectrum, and cause an exponential and unrecognized expansion in the scope of the jurisdictional power of courts.

484. See, e.g., Interlease Aviation Investors II (ALOHA) L.L.C. v. Vanguard Airlines, Inc., 262 F. Supp. 2d 898, 911 (N.D. Ill. 2003) (finding that the defendants “have established minimum contacts with Illinois” before considering the effect of the “fairness” considerations); Adams, 2003 U.S. Dist. LEXIS 4253, at *4-5 (“Even if the defendant has purposefully established the necessary ‘minimum contacts’ within the forum state, consideration of ‘fair play and substantial justice’ may nevertheless defeat the reasonableness of jurisdiction.”); Carrot Bunch, 218 F. Supp. 2d at 824 (stating that two conditions needed for personal jurisdiction are “minimum contacts” and “fair play and substantial justice”); Bassett v. Sinterloy Corp., No. 01C3141, 2002 U.S. Dist. LEXIS 15178, at *14 (N.D. Ill. Aug. 13, 2002) (“Because minimum contacts with Illinois have been established, the court addresses whether exercising jurisdiction over [the defendant] is reasonable and does not violate traditional notions of fair play and substantial justice.”); Braley v. Sportec Prods. Co., No. CIV A. 01-333-JD, 2002 WL 1676293, at *5 (D.N.H. July 16, 2002) (finding that “[p]laintiffs] have met their burden of showing that [defendant] has sufficient minimum contacts with New Hampshire” before considering the “reasonableness of jurisdiction”); Plant Mech. Servs., Inc. v. Drivecon Corp., No. CIV A. 01-0993, 2001 U.S. Dist. LEXIS 13671, at *4-5 (E.D. La. Aug. 23, 2001) (“The exercise of personal jurisdiction over a nonresident defendant satisfies due process when (1) the defendant has . . . establish[ed] ‘minimum contacts’ with that state; and (2) exercising personal jurisdiction over the defendant does not offend ‘traditional notions of fair play and substantial justice.’” (citations omitted)); EMI Music, 97 S.W.3d at 855 (“Upon finding that the nonresident defendant purposefully established minimum contacts with the forum state, we must then determine if the exercise of in personam jurisdiction comports with fair-play and substantial justice.”).
"constitutionally sufficient contacts" to take jurisdiction.\textsuperscript{485} Under International Shoe, when a court had "minimum contacts" it had jurisdiction at the same time, and not before. When modern courts purport to weigh a defendant's "minimum contacts" against the sovereignty, efficiency, and convenience factors in the second half of the "minimum contacts" test, in fact they are weighing a defendant's "purposeful contacts" against such factors.\textsuperscript{486} "Minimum contacts" exist only after a court has found purposeful contacts not outweighed by fairness considerations.\textsuperscript{487} The failure to use "minimum contacts" as a term of art is as widespread a mistake as is the practice of mis-describing the general jurisdiction and nexus standards in the fashion illustrated above, perhaps even more widespread, but because it does not result in as many strange outcomes its consequences are not as harmful. The problem is more one of a lack of doctrinal integrity than ill-advised results.

Lower court paraphrases of Burger King's two-part statement of the "minimum contacts" standard also often undo the clear and logical ordering that statement imposed upon what had become a pretty confused doctrinal world. Now, there are dozens of idiosyncratic formulations of the "minimum contacts" standard, all of which rearrange, subtract from, and add to the elements listed in Burger King, mixing and matching considerations of contacts, sovereignty, efficiency, and convenience in what often seems to be a random and haphazard manner.\textsuperscript{488} These modifications vary in their levels of error, of course; some are fundamentally mistaken, some are incomprehensible, and some are just silly, but all of them create doctrinal nightmares for lawyers charged with the task of arguing jurisdictional issues to courts bound not

\textsuperscript{485} See discussion supra note 69.
\textsuperscript{486} See discussion supra note 468.
\textsuperscript{487} See Burger King Corp. v. Rudzewicz, 471 U.S. 462, 471-78 (1985).

Factors to consider when evaluating the defendant's contacts with the forum [are]: (1) whether the claim arises from the defendant's forum contacts; (2) the overall contacts of the defendant or its agent with the forum state; (3) the foreseeability of being haled into court in that state; (4) who initiated the contacts; and (5) whether the defendant expected or encouraged contacts with the state.

only by what the Supreme Court has said on the subject, but by what local circuit and appeals courts have said as well. When operative legal standards compete in this way, court decisions become more difficult to predict, the costs of legal argument increase, and client uncertainties multiply. And the legal system as a whole, which at the best of times is a difficult to understand regime of rules and policies, becomes truly incomprehensible.

In the way that a half-an-inch misalignment in a golf grip can produce a fifty-yard change in location down the fairway, lower courts running with the Supreme Court’s errors have produced extreme doctrinal consequences from small, initial mistakes. And lawyers manipulating the imprecision and confusion in the Court’s varying formulations of the doctrine have made jurisdictional arguments they must have known made no sense (i.e., any reasonable person would have known they made no sense),\textsuperscript{489} billed clients (who could not know any better) for making these arguments, forced courts to waste valuable judicial time and resources responding, and in the process reinforced the cynicism about the nature and purposes of law and legal practice that is widespread among lawyers, judges, and citizens generally.

If these and other such consequences are to be avoided, the Supreme Court must begin to be more scrupulous about, and give more attention to, the manner in which it defines the personal jurisdiction doctrine. It must use doctrinal language more consistently, hold the meaning of concepts constant over time, work with and refine received conceptual frameworks rather than routinely jettison them for pride of authorship reasons, describe prior cases accurately when relying on them as precedent, clarify rather than repeat ambiguous or misleading principles,

\textsuperscript{489} See, e.g., Waitt, 212 F. Supp. 2d at 957 (arguing for general jurisdiction over third-party defendant lawyer based on the lawyer’s single trip to the forum); Litman v. Walt Disney World Co., No. CIV.A. 01-CV-3891, 2002 U.S. Dist. LEXIS 5115, at *8-9 (E.D. Pa. Mar. 26, 2002) (arguing that Pennsylvania promotional activities of companies related to defendant were a sufficient basis for Pennsylvania jurisdiction over a negligence claim against an employee of the defendant for injuries caused in an automobile accident in Florida); In re Williams, 264 B.R. 234, 241 (Bankr. D. Conn. 2001) (arguing for general jurisdiction over defendants based on its “correspondence sent . . . via post and fax” to plaintiff in forum); see also Hunter v. Mendoza, 197 F. Supp. 2d 964, 971 (N.D. Ohio 2002) (arguing that the “exercise of personal jurisdiction . . . over one defendant . . . automatically confer[s jurisdiction] over all defendants pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1367, through supplemental jurisdiction”). This latter concept, commonly referred to as “pendent personal jurisdiction,” is popular among the circuits. See, e.g., Action Embroidery Corp. v. Atl. Embroidery, Inc., 368 F.3d 1174, 1180-81 (9th Cir. 2004) (latest court adopting the doctrine); United States v. Botefuhr, 309 F.3d 1263, 1273 (10th Cir. 2002) (noting that “every circuit court of appeals to address the question [has] upheld the application of pendent personal jurisdiction”). The Supreme Court has yet to approve of it.
and maintain doctrinal continuity by finding preferred formats (and authors) for expressing the due process standard and staying with those formats (and authors). The Court must also be willing to monitor and revisit the doctrine on a regular basis to let lower courts know when they have gone off track. A constitutional doctrine grounded in fair play and substantial justice is not self-explanatory, or self-executing. In fact, because it deals with matters of morality and politics in context-specific fashion, it is more susceptible than most doctrines to changing views about how it should be understood and expressed, and if it is to have a consistent and coherent meaning over time the Court will need to attend to it regularly. The present time is an instance in which some attention is needed.

III. Minimum Contacts and the Internet: “Now That the Automobile and Telephone Have Given Way to the Internet Service Provider and Peer-To-Peer Sharing”

A new and growing body of personal jurisdiction case law characterized principally by Internet-based forum contacts (through websites, chat rooms, newsgroups, and the like) does not fit easily into the doctrinal categories inherited from the International Shoe-Burger King line of decisions, and provides the Court with both a reason and an opportunity to reconstitute the “minimum contacts” standard. In the


491. For some courts, Internet jurisdiction cases seem to present the prospect of a “brave new world” into which only the most innovative and intrepid dare venture. See, e.g., Zippo Mfg. Co. v. Zippo Dot Com, Inc., 952 F. Supp. 1119, 1123 (W.D. Pa. 1997) (“The Internet makes it possible to conduct business throughout the world entirely from a desktop. With this global revolution looming on the horizon, the development of the law concerning the permissible scope of personal jurisdiction based on Internet use is in its infant stages.”). The court in Zippo based this view on the well-known claim that “[a]s technological progress has increased the flow of commerce between States, the need for jurisdiction has undergone a similar increase.” Id. (alteration in original) (quoting Hanson v. Denckla, 357 U.S. 235, 250-51 (1958)). Strangely, it took this language from Hanson rather than McGee, where the language first appeared. Hanson did not uphold jurisdiction, and immediately following the above quotation it went on to say that it is a mistake to assume that this trend heralds the eventual demise of all restrictions on the personal jurisdiction of state courts. Those restrictions are more than a guarantee of immunity from inconvenient or distant litigation. They are a consequence of territorial limitations on the power of the respective States.
virtual world there are all kinds of nonstandard ways of “doing business,” “producing tortious effects,” and “exercising the privilege of conducting activity” in a state, as well as multiple notions of what it means to put a product into a “stream of commerce,” or “target” (or “expressly aim at”) an individual with defamatory or libelous comments. And in cyberspace the relevant geographical boundaries, both for commercial and non-commercial purposes, are as often those between nation-states as those between states of the Union. While aware of the problem, lower courts have not had much success in adapting the “minimum contacts” standard to these different conditions.

Hanson, 357 U.S. at 251 (citation omitted). Apparently, the Zippo court was in a bind. It preferred the sentiments of McGee, but the authority value of Hanson, and so it quoted Hanson (selectively) quoting McGee.

492. See, e.g., Toys "R" Us, Inc. v. Step Two, S.A., 318 F.3d 446, 450 (3d Cir. 2003) (noting a Spanish website not set up to process U.S. addresses); Graduate Mgmt. Admissions Council v. Raju, 241 F. Supp. 2d 589, 591 (E.D. Va. 2003) (selling practice questions for the Graduate Management Admissions Test through an India-based Internet website, by having customers order the questions from an offshore email address provided online, transfer payment to Western Union, and receive delivery at a requested address); A & M Records, Inc. v. Napster, Inc., 114 F. Supp. 2d 896, 901-08 (N.D. Cal. 2000) (distributing file-sharing software via an Internet website that allows parties in different states to log-on to the Napster system and share MP3 music files directly in a peer-to-peer network with users in other states also logged on to the system); Euromarket Designs, Inc. v. Crate & Barrel Ltd., 96 F. Supp. 2d 824, 829 (N.D. Ill. 2000) (describing Irish retailer with an interactive website stating “Goods Sold Only in the Republic of Ireland,” but that permitted purchaser to list U.S. address as a shipping and billing address).

493. See, e.g., ALS Scan, Inc. v. Digital Serv. Consultants, Inc., 293 F.3d 707, 713 (4th Cir. 2002) (discussing Internet service provider enabling website owner to post photographs on the Internet allegedly in violation of photograph owner’s copyright); Panavision Int’l, 141 F.3d at 1321-22 (registering company trademarks as domain names as part of a scheme to force the companies to purchase the domain names); Pavlovich v. Superior Court, 58 P.3d 2, 10-13 (Cal. 2002) (posting source code for de-encryption software on website accessible in the forum state); Griffis v. Luban, 646 N.W.2d 527, 530 (Minn. 2002) (describing libel during an online newsgroup conversation).


495. See, e.g., Revell v. Lidov, 317 F.3d 467 (5th Cir. 2002) (rejecting the posting of a news article on a journalism website as sufficient for jurisdiction); Pavlovich, 58 P.3d at 11-13 (finding posting of source code for program to circumvent video encryption technology on website not sufficient for jurisdiction); see also Youn g v. New Haven Advocate, 315 F.3d 256, 262-63 (4th Cir. 2002) (finding the posting of a general news story about Virginia prison conditions on paper’s website not sufficient for jurisdiction); Panavision Int’l, 141 F.3d at 1321-22 (registering plaintiff’s trademarks as Internet domain names to extort money not sufficient for jurisdiction); Medinah Mining, Inc. v. A munategui, 237 F. Supp. 2d 1132, 1138 (D. Nev. 2002) (posting defamatory comments on racingbull.com, an interactive website reporting financial news and maintaining information on publicly traded companies insufficient for jurisdiction); Pavlovich, 53 P.3d at 8 n.1.

496. See, e.g., Raju, 241 F. Supp. 2d at 597 (finding jurisdiction over a foreign national with U.S. contacts enough to satisfy the Due Process Clause, even though foreign national did not have sufficient contacts with any particular state).
of the new electronic order. In fact, the dominant pattern in the case law at the present time resembles the pattern dominant during the period between Hanson and Woodson, when the Supreme Court approached the subject of personal jurisdiction from one doctrinal perspective (defendant-veto), and most lower federal and state courts approached it from another (totality-of-the-circumstances). If the response in Woodson is indicative of things to come, it should not be long before the Court intervenes once again to re-impose doctrinal order and, if it follows its past practice, construct a defendant-veto version of the "minimum contacts" that takes into account the changed context of cyberspace.

Whether it makes sense for the Court to reconstitute "minimum contacts" in the same way it did in Woodson is not so clear, however, since it is more difficult to give effective meaning to the idea of defendant-veto in a virtual world than in a physical one. In the latter, one had only to avoid making contracts, renting offices, hiring employees, maintaining inventory, advertising, shipping dangerous products, and other such activities in a forum state for jurisdiction not to attach. Defendants controlled these choices since the technology used in the pre-Internet world to extend one's reach into other states—the telephone, automobile, railroad, airplane, and the like—could be pointed in single directions, so to speak, and did not automatically go everywhere at the same time. But the Internet is not organized geographically along the lines of sovereign states, and it is easier to control the level of access to it than the location from which such access is obtained. The policy of defendant-veto may be somewhat of an anachronism, therefore, in a world where simultaneous connection with all parts of the globe, known and unknown, intended and unintended, is almost instantaneous, and the more flexible "totality-of-the-circumstances" standard might be better adapted to determining when jurisdiction should attach. On the other hand, an open-ended and discretionary jurisdictional standard like "totality of the circumstances" lends itself to manipulation and abuse, often becoming no more than the embodiment of an individual judge's subjective notions of what it means to be fair and just, and if the Court

499. But see Internet Jurisdiction Fears Affecting Global Business Strategy, Experts Say, 72 U.S.L.W. 2614, 2614 (April 13, 2004) [hereinafter Internet Jurisdiction Fears] (finding that sixty-nine percent of North American respondents to a survey on the use of technological tools to influence jurisdictional outcomes use techniques to block access to users hailing from specific geographical locations).
decides to modify the personal jurisdiction standard to accommodate the Internet-contacts cases, it must do so in a manner that avoids this “rule-of-law” criticism.

Lower federal and state courts have recognized the need for an updated version of the “minimum contacts” standard for some time, and a few have taken turns at trying to produce one, but the most popular revision (by an overwhelming margin), the so-called sliding scale test from Zippo Manufacturing Co. v. Zippo Dot Com, Inc., falls well short of the standards for finished work. Zippo was a tort action based principally on trademark infringement. The case was brought in Pennsylvania federal district court by the Zippo Manufacturing Company (Zippo), a Pennsylvania-based maker of a well-known line of tobacco lighters, against Zippo Dot Com (Dot Com), a California-based operator of an Internet news service. Zippo objected to Dot Com’s use of the term Zippo on its several domain names, its website, and in the headings of the messages posted to its various newsgroups. Dot Com had 3,000 subscribers in Pennsylvania (out of 140,000 total subscribers), and agreements with seven Pennsylvania Internet service providers to provide these subscribers with access to its news services. A part from these contacts, however, it had no other connections with Pennsylvania.


502. Id. at 1121. The plaintiff also pleaded dilution and false designation claims under the Federal Trademark Act, and state claims under the Pennsylvania trademark act. See id. at 1121.

503. Id. Subscribers to the news service were able to post and receive messages to and from other subscribers through the various newsgroups made accessible on the company’s website. Id.

504. Id. The company used the domain names of zippo.com, zippo.net, and zipponews.com. See id.

505. Id.

506. Id.
Finding the “traditional framework” for analyzing personal jurisdiction questions inadequate, the court concluded that the availability of jurisdiction based exclusively on Internet contacts should be “directly proportionate to the nature and quality of [the] commercial activity that an entity conducts over the Internet.”

According to Zippo, a defendant’s forum contacts exist on a “sliding scale,” or “spectrum.”

At one end of the spectrum are situations where a defendant clearly does business over the Internet. [Here] personal jurisdiction is required in all cases — possibly even in the absence of any contacts with the state.

507. The court’s description of this framework was reasonably accurate. While it made the familiar mistake of describing general jurisdiction in terms of “systematic and continuous” contacts, id. at 1122 (citing Helicopteros Nacionales de Colombia, S. A. v. Hall, 466 U.S. 408, 414-16 (1984)), its “three-pronged test” for specific jurisdiction tracked familiar ground, see id. at 1122-23. Strangely though, it also seemed to imply that only specific jurisdiction was part of the “minimum contacts” standard. See id. at 1122 (“In the absence of general jurisdiction, specific jurisdiction permits a court to exercise personal jurisdiction over a non-resident defendant . . . where the ‘relationship between the defendant and the forum falls within the “minimum contacts” framework’ of International Shoe . . . and its progeny.” (citation omitted)).

508. Id. at 1124. At first glance this might seem to be a form of International Shoe’s “nature, quality, and circumstances” test for evaluating single and isolated contacts giving rise to the claim, see supra notes 35-41 and accompanying text, but the court in Zippo did not use it this way, see Zippo, 952 F. Supp. at 1124.

509. Use of the expression “sliding scale” in this context does not fit easily within either the historical or contemporary meanings of the term. Typically, a sliding scale is a “scale or standard . . . which rises or falls in proportion to, or conversely to, the rise or fall of some other standard.” 15 THE OXFORD ENGLISH DICTIONARY 702 (2d ed. 1998). In other words, the expression describes the movement of one variable up or down on a scale in relation to some other variable outside the scale. But in the Zippo court’s use of the term, the relevant “other” variable (defendant contacts with a state) is the same as the variable represented on the scale. There is only one variable involved, in other words, and that is the extent of the defendant’s connection with the state. In reality then, the Zippo court created a “level of interactivity,” or “spectrum” test, more than a “sliding scale” test, but given the open-endedness and lack of algorithm in such a standard, it probably is more accurate to say that it simply came up with a new paraphrase of the “totality of the circumstances” test. Looked at in this way, however, the “sliding scale” test is just another in a long line of devices used surreptitiously by courts to subvert the defendant veto view of personal jurisdiction under the guise of enforcing it. (That the court would use the test in a tort action, where a defendant’s level of commercial activity in the state would seem to be beside the point, is more evidence of that fact.) There is nothing new in a “sliding scale” test, therefore, just as there is nothing new in Internet-based, “doing-business” contacts with a forum. Commercial dealing over the Internet is not different in any significant respect from telemarketing generally, and it does not require a new form of the minimum contacts standard anymore than did telemarketing. Internet contacts are sometimes different in certain specialized kinds of tort claims, however, particularly those based on what used to be called “random, fortuitous, or isolated” forum contacts, Keeton v. Hustler Magazine, Inc., 465 U.S. 770, 774 (1984), but what now might be better described as “impulsive, impetuous, and spontaneous” forum contacts. Whether the latter are the legitimate offspring of the former, and if so, whether they should be treated in the same way, are difficult questions that the Zippo court does not take up.
jurisdiction is proper. At the opposite end are situations where a defendant has simply posted information on [a passive] Internet Web site[, and here there are] not grounds for the exercise of personal jurisdiction.\footnote{510}

In the all-important middle category, “where a user [is able to] exchange information [(i.e., ‘interact’)] with [a] host computer[,] the exercise of jurisdiction is determined by examining the level of interactivity and commercial nature of the exchange of information that occurs on the Web site.”\footnote{511} If the interactivity is great enough, jurisdiction attaches.\footnote{512} Applying this, in effect, “level of commercial activity”\footnote{513} test to the facts before it, the court concluded that “Dot Com [did] more than create an interactive Web site through which it exchange[ed] information with Pennsylvania residents . . . [Instead it] conduct[ed] . . . electronic commerce with Pennsylvania residents [so as to] constitute[] the purposeful availment of doing business in Pennsylvania,” and thus was subject to jurisdiction in the State.\footnote{514}

There is an immediate problem with this analysis if one thinks of it in traditional “minimum contacts” terms. Zippo argued for specific jurisdiction over Dot Com, conceding that general jurisdiction was not available.\footnote{515} Consequently, the court had to determine whether Zippo’s claims arose from Dot Com’s Pennsylvania Internet contacts.\footnote{516} Such a

\footnote{510. See Zippo, 952 F. Supp. at 1124 (citation omitted). The court is not always consistent in its usage of scale or spectrum. Id.

511. Id. The court’s three categories reduce to its final one, of course, since “doing business” and “posting information” are just different “levels of interactivity.”

512. Id. at 1124-25.

513. This paraphrase combines the two distinct features of the court’s statement of the standard, “interactivity” and “commercial nature of the exchange.” Id. at 1124.

514. Id. at 1125-26. Perhaps not surprisingly, given the extent to which the concept is not understood, some courts even find that an interactive website is sufficient in itself to support general jurisdiction. See, e.g., Gator.com Corp. v. L.L. Bean, Inc., 341 F.3d 1072, 1078-82 (9th Cir. 2003) vacated rehe’g granted en banc, 366 F.3d 789 (9th Cir. 2004); Gorman v. Ameritrade Holding Corp., 293 F.3d 506, 513 (D.C. Cir. 2002). But see Revell v. Lidov, 317 F.3d 467, 471 (5th Cir. 2002) (holding that the maintenance of a website is “not in any way ‘substantial’” contact and cannot support general jurisdiction); Bird v. Parsons, 289 F.3d 865, 873-74 (6th Cir. 2002). Taken literally, the Ameritrade rule would permit a plaintiff to bring any kind of claim against a party in a state in which that party has an accessible interactive website, even if the claim has no connection with the state or the website. Since websites are usually accessible everywhere, this means that a defendant with an interactive website could be sued on anything, everywhere. In the brave new world of cyberspace, so it seems, personal jurisdiction knows no bounds. For a rejection of the “jurisdiction everywhere” argument, see Pavlovich v. Superior Court, 58 P.3d 2, 8 (Cal. 2002).

515. Zippo, 952 F. Supp. at 1122-23 (“[Zippo] Manufacturing does not contend that we should exercise general personal jurisdiction over Dot Com.”).

516. Id.
nexus relationship, one will recall, is the defining feature of specific jurisdiction.\textsuperscript{517} Zippo sued Dot Com for trademark infringement, however, a tort, and not for breach of a commercial agreement.\textsuperscript{518} Zippo was not a Dot Com subscriber and it did not have any other contractual relationships with the company.\textsuperscript{519} Given this, the court’s use of what, in effect, was a “doing business” standard (i.e., “the level of commercial activity conducted over the Internet”) for determining the availability of jurisdiction was confusing.\textsuperscript{520} An “effects plus” test, the standard for multi-state torts, would have been a more understandable choice. The court should have asked whether Dot Com’s Internet activity produced a tortious effect in Pennsylvania, and whether the company’s business activities as a whole satisfied any of the so-called plus factors\textsuperscript{521} designed to insure that taking jurisdiction would be fair.

The court’s conclusion, stated later in the opinion, “that [Zippo’s] cause of action [arose] out of Dot Com’s forum-related conduct [because] ‘a cause of action for trademark infringement occurs where the passing off [of the trademark] occurs,’”\textsuperscript{522} serves to underscore this point. It was Dot Com’s “passing off” of the Zippo trade name on its website that gave rise to the plaintiff’s claim, not its commercial activity in the State, and this “passing off” occurred whenever Dot Com used the Zippo name.\textsuperscript{523} The level of the company’s commercial activity in Pennsylvania was relevant only for the purpose of establishing the existence of such “passing off.”\textsuperscript{524} If Dot Com used the Zippo name to solicit business in the State but was unsuccessful, for example, the “passing off” standard still would have been met. The court’s mistake here, that of mixing and matching tort and contract-based formulations of the “minimum contacts” standard, is not a new one, of course, but it is a particularly troublesome one in an Internet jurisdiction case because Internet cases are where most of the difficult issues of this sort arise, and where the greatest doctrinal clarity is needed.

A more serious but equally familiar problem with the Zippo “sliding scale” test is its susceptibility, in the hands of a willful judge, to being

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{517} See supra notes 37-38.
  \item \textsuperscript{518} See Zippo, 952 F. Supp. at 1121.
  \item \textsuperscript{519} Id.
  \item \textsuperscript{520} Zippo had to show that Dot Com did business using the Zippo name to establish infringement, but not that it did business with Zippo. See id. at 1124-25.
  \item \textsuperscript{521} For an illustration of such “plus” factors, see supra note 263 and accompanying text.
  \item \textsuperscript{522} Zippo, 952 F. Supp. at 1127 (quoting Cottman Transmission Sys., Inc. v. Martino, 36 F.3d 291, 294 (3d Cir. 1994) (citing Tefal, S.A. v. Products Int’l Co., 529 F.2d 495, 496 n.1 (3d Cir. 1976))).
  \item \textsuperscript{523} Id. at 1121-22.
  \item \textsuperscript{524} Id. at 1125-26.
\end{itemize}
turned into a kind of all-purpose balancing test. Its open-ended and flexible terms permit a judge to take all types of factors into account in ruling on a jurisdictional question, and to weigh and compare those factors in whatever fashion the judge thinks appropriate, without necessarily having to rank the factors or make any one of them (e.g., the purposefulness of the defendant’s forum contacts) first among equals. When used in this fashion, the Zippo standard does little more than reinstate the discredited totality-of-the-circumstances policy of McGee under the guise of a “sliding scale” algorithm, the same policy the Supreme Court rejected in Hanson, Woodson, Kulko, and the rest of its modern personal jurisdiction case law. In fact, if the Court has made one thing clear in the last twenty-five years, it is that a defendant can avoid the extra-territorial jurisdictional reach of a state by avoiding purposeful contacts with it. A sliding scale test permits, and may even encourage, a retreat from that commitment.

This does not mean that the Zippo standard is useless. It works perfectly well for Internet cases raising claims in the nature of a breach of contract. In such cases, the jurisdictional question will usually turn on how the defendant configures its website, both in the kind of information it makes available on the site and the extent of the interaction it makes permissible for customers. When customers can do everything on a website they can do in a store, a defendant’s forum contacts are “virtually” indistinguishable from the contacts created by establishing a store in the state and transacting business in person. If a defendant does not want this kind of contact with a particular state, it has only to make its website inaccessible to customers in that state. For claims based on economic transactions, therefore, questions about cyberspace jurisdiction are not essentially different from the questions considered in International Shoe, and it follows that they can be resolved by using

527. Not everyone feels this way. See Patrick J. Borchers, Internet Libel: The Consequences of a Non-rule Approach to Personal Jurisdiction, 98 NW. U. L. REV. 473, 478-81 (2004) (arguing that we should forget about Zippo). Much of the time the question of Zippo’s influence will be moot, since the issue of jurisdiction will be controlled by a forum selection clause in the parties’ agreement. There is no necessary incompatibility between the “sliding scale” test and such a clause. See, e.g., Decker v. Circus Circus Hotel, 49 F. Supp. 2d 743, 748 (D.N.J. 1999) (accepting Zippo test but enforcing forum selection clause).
528. But see Toys “R” Us, Inc. v. Step Two, S.A., 318 F.3d 446, 452-54 (3d Cir. 2003) (requiring “something more” than a fully interactive website to sustain jurisdiction).
529. This is becoming increasingly easier to do. See Internet Jurisdiction Fears, supra note 499 (describing “jurisdiction avoidance mechanisms . . . to pinpoint the geographic location of specific users and block access by users hailing from that jurisdiction”).
International Shoe type standards. For certain kinds of tort actions, however, where the focus is on the “effects” a defendant produces in the forum, the issues are not as simple. It is relatively easier to libel someone inadvertently or fortuitously over the Internet, for example, impulsively, on the spur of the moment, usually in reaction to another’s comments, with consequences everywhere,\textsuperscript{530} than it is in a world where one must first think about the libel, “write it up” in a magazine article or newspaper story, and then get it published, and inadvertent and fortuitous forum contacts have never been enough to support long-arm jurisdiction.\textsuperscript{531} If the Calder concepts of “effects-plus,” “target,” and “expressly aim” are to be used to resolve questions of Internet-based long-arm jurisdiction, therefore, as it seems they must,\textsuperscript{532} they will need some modification.\textsuperscript{533}

Whether every impulsive chat room comment\textsuperscript{534} should subject a speaker to litigation in a distant forum raises different concerns than the question of whether Larry Flynt should be required to travel to New Hampshire to defend his well-considered caricature of Kathy Keeton distributed in 10,000 copies of the March issue of Hustler Magazine,\textsuperscript{535} or whether a writer and editor of The National Enquirer should be required to travel to California to defend their conscious trashing of Shirley Jones.

\begin{footnotes}
\item[530] Typically by bad-mouthing the person during an argument in a chat room or newsgroup. When argument fails, epithet is often there to take up the cause.
\item[531] See, e.g., World-Wide Volkswagen Corp. v. Woodson, 444 U.S. 286, 295-99 (1980). Another way to think of this is to see the Internet as eliminating International Shoe’s category of “single and isolated” contacts. No matter how limited the action of a defendant, if that action is taken on the Internet there is little possibility of being connected to only one jurisdiction, or for only a single instance.
\item[532] Calder is the key case for long-arm libel jurisdiction, since it is the only Supreme Court libel case to rely on a tort based formulation of the “minimum contacts” standard. See Griffis v. Luban, 646 N.W.2d 527, 532 (Minn. 2002). Keeton also involved a libel claim, but the Court analyzed the jurisdictional issue on a “doing business” standard for the New Hampshire claim, and a substantive law policy (the “single publication rule”) for the claims arising in the forty-nine other states. See Keeton v. Hustler Magazine, Inc., 465 U.S. 770, 773-74 (1984).
\item[533] Many courts have had a go at this task. See, e.g., Revell v. Lidov, 317 F.3d 467, 470-72 (5th Cir. 2002); Young v. New Haven Advocate, 315 F.3d 256, 262-63 (4th Cir. 2002); A L S Scan, Inc. v. Digital Serv. Consultants, Inc., 293 F.3d 707, 714 (4th Cir. 2002); Medinah Mining, Inc. v. A munategui, 237 F. Supp. 2d 1132, 1137-38 (D. Nev. 2002); Griffis, 646 N.W.2d at 533-35. For an excellent summary and discussion of the case law in Internet libel jurisdiction, see Borchers, supra note 527, at 481-89.
\item[534] Or even an essentially local newspaper story, posted on the paper’s website, which allegedly libels someone from another state in passing, and then is read by that person in his home state. See Young, 315 F.3d at 258, 260 (describing a story about Connecticut policy of subcontracting incarceration of Connecticut state prison inmates to Virginia prison system that describes Virginia prison warden in an unfavorable light).
\end{footnotes}
in 600,000 copies of one week’s edition of the paper.\footnote{Calder v. Jones, 465 U.S. 783, 785 (1984).} Flynt and the Enquirer writers thought about their comments over an extended period of time.\footnote{Even more, they worked diligently at researching the article in question, and at expressing their comments in the most persuasive form they could devise.} knew the risks involved in publishing them,\footnote{Calder, 465 U.S. at 789-90; Keeton, 465 U.S. at 781.} and were capable of defending themselves (with the help of company lawyers), in the New Hampshire and California forums. But the same will not always be true for every impetuous chat room flame thrower.

Consider the case of Marianne Luban.\footnote{Griffis v. Luban, 646 N.W.2d 527 (Minn. 2002).} In an extended exchange in an Internet news group,\footnote{The group was sci.archeology. Id. at 530.} Marianne Luban told Katherine Griffis, an adjunct professor in the University of Alabama at Birmingham’s Department of Special Studies, that she (Griffis) got her degree “from a ‘box of Cracker Jacks,’” and otherwise criticized her credentials and reputation as an Egyptologist.\footnote{Griffis taught noncredit courses in ancient Egyptian history and culture at the university and had her own consulting business. Id. Luban also asserted “that Griffis obtained membership in the International Association of Egyptologists and inclusion on other lists of Egyptologists by misrepresenting her qualifications, that [she] was a liar, was not affiliated with the University of Alabama, did not have a juris doctor degree, and that [her] consulting business was not legitimate.” Id.} Griffis and Luban traded comments for about six months, until Griffis’s attorney sent a letter to Luban demanding that she retract her statements and refrain from attacking Griffis’s character and professional reputation in the future.\footnote{Griffis alleged that Luban continued to post comments, but the record before the court did not include any such statements after the date of the attorney letter. Id.} The attorney threatened legal action if Luban failed to do this.\footnote{She did this on the advice of her lawyer. See id.} Luban may or may not have stopped criticizing Griffis (the evidence was mixed), but several months later Griffis filed a defamation action against Luban in Alabama state court.\footnote{The court also ordered Luban to pay Griffis $25,000 in damages. Id.} Luban, a Minnesota resident, failed to appear to defend,\footnote{Id. at 537. The actual procedure involved was more complicated. Luban filed a motion to vacate the Alabama judgment, the Minnesota trial court concluded that Alabama had personal jurisdiction over Luban, denied Luban’s motion, and then ordered entry of the judgment against Luban. Id. at 530-31. On appeal, the Minnesota Court of Appeals vacated the trial court’s order. Id. at 531.} and the Alabama court entered a default judgment against her.\footnote{Id. at 531.}

When Griffis tried to enforce the judgment in Minnesota, however, the Minnesota Supreme Court refused to give it full faith and credit.\footnote{Id. at 537.}
Viewing the issue as controlled by Calder, the court held that Alabama lacked personal jurisdiction over Luban. Aknow ledging that there was a dispute among the circuits over the meaning of Calder, the Minnesota Supreme Court adopted the Third Circuit’s paraphrase of the Calder standard as articulated in its Imo Industries decision.

According to Imo Industries, Calder requires the plaintiff to show that: (1) the defendant committed an intentional tort; (2) the plaintiff felt the brunt of the harm in the forum; and (3) the defendant expressly aimed the tortious conduct at the forum such that the forum state was the focal point of the tortious activity.

Applying this standard, the Minnesota Supreme Court concluded that while “Luban’s statements were intentionally directed at Griffis” in Alabama, they were not “expressly aimed” at the State, and thus did not support jurisdiction. This seems a strange, perhaps contradictory, conclusion—how does one aim at a person in a state without aiming at the state—but the strangeness is not in the Minnesota Supreme Court’s choice of Calder terminology. Calder used the concept of “expressly
aim[] to describe a type of behavior that could provide an extra measure of purposefulness sufficient to establish jurisdiction over an out-of-state defendant in a multi-state defamation action when the defendant had no contact with the state other than the defamatory comments.\textsuperscript{556} The difficulty with the Minnesota Supreme Court’s paraphrase of Calder, and with all opinions using this Calder language, is in knowing what it means to “expressly aim at” (or “target”) a defendant or a state.\textsuperscript{557} The concept is not self-explanatory, and while Griffis provides one of the best attempts to parse the term, in the end it comes up short.\textsuperscript{558}

The Minnesota Supreme Court seemed to interpret the expression as primarily a substantive concept, concerned with the content of what is said rather than where it is said, or perhaps even where it has its principal effect, though the court’s view on this latter point is less clear.\textsuperscript{559} Building on language in Woodson (and also Burger King and Asahi, though the court did not cite to these cases), the court concluded that Luban had to do more than “know” that Griffis was a resident of Alabama, or “foresee” that she would feel the effects of the tortious comments there, for the comments to be expressly aimed at the State.\textsuperscript{560} “[T]he Supreme Court,” it said, “did not carve out a special intentional torts exception to the traditional specific jurisdiction analysis, so that a plaintiff could always sue in his or her home state.”\textsuperscript{561} But then, curiously, since it seems to describe a “foreseeable effects” test of the

\textsuperscript{555} Calder v. Jones, 465 U.S. 783, 789 (1984). It also described the concept as “targeting.” Id. (“[P]etitioners are not charged with mere untargeted negligence.”).

\textsuperscript{556} Id. at 786, 789-90.

\textsuperscript{557} It also is hard to know whether it is the defendant or state (or both) that must be targeted. It would seem that the object of the libel also would have to be the target of the tortious conduct for jurisdictional purposes, but the Griffis court’s view on this issue is not that clear.

\textsuperscript{558} There are several recent Internet and newspaper libel cases adopting Calder’s “targeting” standard, and one could use any of them as a basis for the discussion in this section. See, e.g., Revell Lidov, 317 F.3d 467, 473, 476 (5th Cir. 2002); Young v. New Haven Advocate, 315 F.3d 256, 262-63 (4th Cir. 2002). Each has distinctive attributes that permit discussion of issues not raised by Griffis, and distinctive weaknesses that illustrate other difficulties with the concept of targeting. I use Griffis because it contains one of the best descriptions of the circuit split over the meaning of Calder, and the most fully developed description of what one might call the “geographical” conception of targeting, what the California federal district court refers to as “geo-targeting.” Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer Studios Inc. v. Grokster, Ltd., 243 F. Supp. 2d 1073, 1086 (C.D. Cal. 2003), a conception that is rapidly becoming the most popular one, see, e.g., Revell, 317 F.3d at 475; Young, 315 F.3d at 262-63; Remick v. Manfredy, 238 F.3d 248, 258-59 (3d Cir. 2001); Reynolds v. Int’l Amateur Athletic Fed’n, 23 F.3d 1110, 1119-20 (6th Cir. 1994).

\textsuperscript{559} See, e.g., Griffis v. Luban, 646 N.W.2d 527, 535-36 (Minn. 2002).

\textsuperscript{560} See id. at 532, 536-37.

\textsuperscript{561} Id. at 535 (quoting Imo Indus., Inc. v. Kiekert A.G., 155 F.3d 254, 265 (3d Cir. 1998)).
sort just explicitly rejected, the court characterized the critical question in the case as whether Alabama was the “focal point” of Luban’s tortious activity.\(^{562}\)

Part of the answer, it said, depended upon the content of Luban’s remarks, and another part depended upon whether the effects of those remarks were felt principally in Alabama.\(^{563}\) It was significant, said the court, that “[t]he newsgroup on which Luban posted her statements was organized around the subjects of archeology and Egyptology, not Alabama or the University of Alabama academic community,” and that there was no “unique relationship” between these two academic fields and the State.\(^{564}\) Had Luban disparaged Griffis in Alabama argot, so it seems, or in terms of her Alabama behavior, the outcome might have been different.\(^{565}\) It also was important, according to the court, that Griffis did “not present[] evidence that any other person in Alabama read [Luban’s] statements,” and that “readers most likely [were] spread all around the country—maybe even around the world—and not necessarily in the Alabama forum.”\(^{566}\) This combination of factors—that

\(^{562}\) Id.

\(^{563}\) Id. at 534.

\(^{564}\) Id. at 535-36. Contra Pavlovich v. Superior Court, 58 P.3d 2, 12 (Cal. 2002) (refusing to adopt an expansive interpretation of the effects test that would find jurisdiction just because the industry affected by defendant’s tortious conduct is centered in the forum state).

\(^{565}\) In applying this concept of “geo-targeting,” the court pointed out that Luban posted “only two messages . . . on the sci.archeology newsgroup . . . that identified the Alabama forum in any way,” Griffis, 646 N.W.2d at 535 n.3. In one posting she said “that Griffis was ‘from the great state of Alabama,’” and in the other she asked about the “special studies” program at the University of Alabama. Id. Taking the concept of geo-targeting to new distances, the Ninth Circuit has held that an act in one state, directed at a second state, can be considered “expressly aimed” at yet a third state if the plaintiff lives there. See Bancroft & Masters, Inc. v. Augusta Nat’l Inc., 223 F.3d 1082, 1088 (9th Cir. 2000) (drafting and mailing letter from Georgia to official domain name register in Virginia, challenging plaintiff’s use of www.masters.com domain name, held to be expressly aimed at California because plaintiff lived there). But see Schwarzenegger v. Fred Martin Motor Co., 374 F.3d 797 (9th Cir. 2004) (placing ad containing likeness of plaintiff in Ohio newspaper without plaintiff’s permission held to be expressly aimed at Ohio rather than California, even though plaintiff lived in California, because purpose of ad was to convince Ohio readers to lease automobiles from defendant).

\(^{566}\) Id. at 536. Revell v. Lidov, 317 F.3d 467, 473 (5th Cir. 2002) (stating that it is an “insurmountable hurdle[] to the exercise of personal jurisdiction [that] the article written by Lidov about Revell contains no reference to Texas, nor does it refer to the Texas activities of Revell, and it was not directed at Texas readers as distinguished from readers in other states”); Young v. New Haven Advocate, 315 F.3d 256, 263 (4th Cir. 2002) (stating that in order to determine whether the defendant newspapers “manifest an intent to target and focus on Virginia readers[, a court must] turn to the pages from the newspapers’ websites . . . and . . . examine their general thrust and content [to see if they are] aimed at a Virginia audience”); Remick v. Manfredy, 238 F.3d 248, 250 (3d Cir. 2001) (stating that the allegations that the defamatory comments had been distributed
Luban’s comments were not about Alabama and that they were not read by Alabamians—proved that the State was not the “focal point” of the defamation, at least as the court saw it, and this, in turn, meant that Luban had not “targeted” Griffis in the State.\(^5\)

The court’s waffling on the question of whether tortious effects, by themselves, can establish jurisdiction (i.e., rejecting an “effects” test in principle but applying a version of it in practice) illustrates the difficulty of giving precise meaning to the concept of targeting, and it also shows how that standard does not do much to constrain a court that has made up its mind about whether jurisdiction is available. Moreover, the court’s failure to explain why defamatory comments that mention, or are about, the forum state should count for more jurisdictionally than comments that defame the plaintiff in more generic terms, only adds to the confusion. Defamatory comments destroy a person’s reputation whether they mention the forum state or not, and whether residents of that state read them or not. The “focal point” of a defamation is usually where the defamed person has the most highly developed reputation (because that is where there is the greatest potential for reputational harm to be done), and typically that is the person’s home state. A test which focuses on the content of the defamation confuses a substantive law concern with a jurisdictional one. Jurisdiction is about contacts with a forum, not comments about it, and comments do not have a greater connection with a forum simply because they mention or discuss it (or fail to). Such comments may be of greater interest to forum residents, but this is relevant to determining the nature and extent of the harm done rather than the degree of connection between the forum and the comments.\(^5\)

The problem becomes more complicated if one changes the facts in Griffis to make the exchange a little more spontaneous and a little more Alabama-specific. Suppose Luban disparaged Griffis in the same

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\(^5\) See Griffis, 664 N.W.2d at 535-36.

\(^5\) Limiting the conception of targeting to comments that are about both the forum and the plaintiff also restricts jurisdiction to states likely to have the greatest sympathy for the plaintiff and greatest antipathy for the defendant, or in other words, states in which the plaintiff has the best chance of winning on its claim. But this conception of targeting reinstates a version of the “plaintiff always gets to sue at home” view the Griffis court said the Supreme Court had rejected. Id. at 535. Here, the Court seems to have looped back on and contradicted itself.
sci.archeology newsgroup, but this time did so impulsively, on the spur of
the moment, in the exaggerated language of someone who is angry at, or
frustrated by, the way the conversation is going. And suppose that she
also disparaged the State of Alabama at the same time by adding that
"all of Alabama and its rinky-dink University come from the same
Cracker Jacks box as your degree" (and hyperbolic variations thereon).
Suppose she said this just once, felt sorry for it almost instantly, and
apologized in a day or two after the tone of the conversation had calmed
down. Her comments were not carefully planned, she did not deliberate
about or edit them until they expressed her opinion in its most powerful
form, and she did not search carefully for the best publisher. But
suppose also that the comments were circulated widely among the faculty
and staff (i.e., Griffis’s peers, friends, and colleagues) of the university in
the perversely curious way that such comments tend to be. If the
Minnesota Supreme Court’s (and Third Circuit’s) conception of targeting
is to be followed, and it is the most popular view,569 Luban would then
seem to have to answer to a defamation action in Alabama even though,
in many ways, what she did had less connection with the State than her
comments in the actual case.

If targeting requires a kind of “geographical marker” in a defendant’s
defamatory comments, as Griffis seems to say it does, it is difficult to
understand how this feature satisfies Calder’s “super-purposefulness”
requirement. A geographical reference does not invariably evidence a
willful or malicious state of mind, or give comments a greater presence or
accessibility in a forum than they would have had without such a
reference. The idea of “forum contact” has always been used to describe
some sort of link to a state, either the carrying out of an activity, or the
production of an effect, in it, and yet a defamatory comment that harms a
state resident’s reputation has the same degree of connection with, or
effect in, the state whether it refers to the state or not. The content of a
comment adds nothing to its degree of forum accessibility or
connectedness. On a “geographical” conception of targeting, however, a
reference to the state is taken to change the “connecting” nature of the
comment altogether. One could legitimately wonder what such a
conception has to do with “fair play and substantial justice.”570 It seems
accurate to say, then, that the idea of targeting as a jurisdictional

569. See Revell, 317 F.3d at 473; Hy Cite Corp. v. Badbusinessbureau.com, LLC, 397 F.
2003).

570. The geo-targeting concept is well-intended. Some limitation on the idea of
tortious forum effects is needed if inadvertent chat room comments are not, by
themselves, to establish jurisdiction wherever they are read, and if they are, this would
introduce a form of the “jurisdiction everywhere” problem. See supra note 514. But it will
take more than good intentions to satisfy the Due Process Clause.
standard remains an elusive concept at best and is in need of considerable development\textsuperscript{571} before it can serve as a workable modern embodiment of the idea of “minimum contacts.”\textsuperscript{572}

571. Some of this will involve explaining the role of Burger King’s “fairness factors” in the targeting standard. Targeting is mostly a test for measuring the level of purposefulness of a defendant’s contacts with a forum, but purposeful contacts are just one part of the “minimum contacts” standard. See World-Wide Volkswagen v. Woodson, 444 U.S. 286, 291-92 (1980). Contacts must be “considered in light of” the institutional and systemic concerns that make up the “fairness factors” part of the test before one can say whether jurisdiction exists. Id. at 292. Calder does not discuss these factors to any great extent, but libel litigation may be an area of law in which fairness factors will play a disproportionately large role.

572. One could argue the opposite, that a “geo-targeting” test, applied literally, provides a defendant with the greatest possible control over the issue of jurisdiction—since a sufficiently clever defendant should have no difficulty expressing defamatory comments in a geographically acontextual manner—and as such, is the strongest modern embodiment of the defendant veto view of “minimum contacts.” But this does not settle the question of whether the defendant veto view should any longer be taken as valid. As the modern world becomes ever more communitarian, the relevant social unit for legal regulatory (including jurisdictional) purposes seems increasingly to be the group as much as the individual. Think of the plaintiffs in Carnival Cruise Lines, Inc. v. Shute, 499 U.S. 585 (1991), for example, who were held to have agreed to a forum selection clause they neither knew about, read, nor understood, simply because the clause was fair in the aggregate to all of the parties and institutions involved in the dispute, as well as to consumers generally. See id. at 590.

[A] . . . forum clause in a form contract . . . well may be permissible [because] a cruise line has a special interest in limiting the fora in which it potentially could be subject to suit. [The] clause . . . dispel[s] any confusion about where suits arising from the contract must be brought and defended, sparing litigants the time and expense of pretrial motions to determine the correct forum and conserving judicial resources that otherwise would be devoted to deciding those motions . . . . Passengers . . . benefit in the form of reduced fares. Id. at 593-94 (citation omitted). The due process right to fair (jurisdictional) treatment may slowly be becoming a collective right, in other words, as much as an individual one. Perhaps the old New Yorker cartoon of a parent explaining to a child that a multi-person statute illustrates that “there are no great men anymore, only great committees,” has finally come true. See generally Donald G. Gifford, The Assault upon the Citadel of Individual Causation (Aug. 16, 2004) (unpublished manuscript, on file with the author) (describing trend in common law tort doctrine toward defining causality in terms of collective plaintiffs and collective defendants); Charles A. Sullivan, The Under-theorized Asterisk* Footnote 17-18 (unpublished manuscript, on file with the author) (describing “explosion” of communal work in law and other areas of the academy).

If so, this change is not necessarily all for the good. If individual defendants no longer have veto power over extra-territorial jurisdiction, states will be on an equal footing to compete for litigation, and this is likely to result in an unseemly race to the blandishment bottom. The absence of individualist based obstacles to jurisdiction will permit courts everywhere to emulate courts in Harris County, Texas; Cook County, Illinois; Dade County, Florida; and others (the names change on a daily basis), in promising the “largest damage awards,” and the “greatest likelihood of plaintiff success on the merits.” See Theodore Eisenberg & Martin T. Wells, Trial Outcomes and Demographics: Is There a Bronx Effect?, 80 Tex. L. Rev. 1839, 1851-54, 1865-70 (2002) (study of the correlation
The confusions and contradictions evident in the “sliding scale” and “targeting” standards of Zippo and Griffis are symptomatic of the state of affairs in modern personal jurisdiction case law. These two tests are the most popular reformulations of International Shoe’s original “minimum contacts” standard for contract and tort based claims respectively, and yet each lacks the coherence and clarity one has a right to expect from a due process standard. Neither concept is very well-defined, neither is intuitive or possessed of clear heuristic value, and both can be used to justify different and sometimes even opposite results on the same facts. Moreover, neither has any explicit linguistic connection with the original language and policies of the personal jurisdiction doctrine, and each permits lower federal and state courts to turn jurisdictional analysis into a free-wheeling, black-box process in which whatever particular judges happen to think is correct becomes the operational standard. “Sliding scale” and “targeting” reduce the complex conceptual and political legacy of several generations of personal jurisdiction doctrine to amorphous, nondescriptive aphorisms, and move the analysis of jurisdictional questions away from the realm of fair play and substantial justice to the realm of idiosyncratic private judicial vision. It is not an overstatement to say that the cacophony which surrounds the personal jurisdiction doctrine is now out of control. The doctrine has come so far, so to speak, that it has seemingly disconnected from itself, or like a very confused snake, has begun to

573. Courts also have had difficulty adjusting the concept of “minimum contacts” to developments in Internet technology. The best example is the California federal district court’s discussion of the application of the standard to peer-to-peer networking in the Grokster MP3 file sharing case. See Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer Studios Inc. v. Grokster, Ltd., 243 F. Supp. 2d 1073, 1088-95 (C.D. Cal. 2003), where the court’s discussion of the standard reads like a compendium of every formulation ever used.

between population demographics and jury verdicts); Erik K. Moller et al., Punitive Damages in Financial Injury Verdicts, 28 J. LEGAL STUD. 283, 332-34 (1999) (describing the differences in punitive damages awarded by courts in California; Cook County, Illinois; metropolitan St. Louis; Harris County, Texas; and New York State); Edward A. Purcell, Jr., Geography as a Litigation Weapon: Consumers, Forum-Selection Clauses, and the Rehnquist Court, 40 UCLA L. REV. 423, 445-49 (1992) (describing the impact of geography on claim disputes); Laurie P. Cohen, Southern Exposure: Lawyer Gets Investors To Sue GE, Prudential in Poor Border Town, WALL ST. J., Nov. 30, 1994, at A1 (describing why Eagle Pass, Texas, “may be the most pro-plaintiff county in America”). Litigation will become more geographically concentrated as some states win in this race for the most plaintiff-friendly reputation and others lose, and the effect on litigants will be equally uneven. Both individual and corporate parties will become more vulnerable to extra-territorial jurisdiction, of course, since both individuals and corporations can be defendants as easily as plaintiffs, but overall, corporations will be better able than individuals to turn the uncertainties and expenses of these new conditions to their benefit. In a world where individual interests can be outweighed by collective ones, bigger fish cut a wider swath.

573.
swallow its own tail. Only the Supreme Court can hope to prevent it from self-destructing, and it should.

IV. CONCLUSION

Since the middle of the last century the Supreme Court has made a major refinement of the “minimum contacts” standard about once every twenty years, usually in response to widespread lower court confusion and disagreement over what the standard has come to mean. It has been twenty years since the decision in Burger King, the last of the Court’s major personal jurisdiction decisions, and confusion and disagreement are the order of the day. Examples are not hard to come by. General jurisdiction has become a crazy-quilt pattern of jurisdictional policies and standards that no longer resembles its historical antecedents or has any unifying principle, consistency, or predictive capability. It is perhaps as confusing a concept as any in the long history of due process jurisprudence. And specific jurisdiction is not much clearer. Lawyers and judges seem to understand that specific jurisdiction requires some sort of relationship between a defendant’s forum contacts and a plaintiff’s claim, but they rarely agree on what that relationship must be, or what kind of evidence it would take to satisfy it. In what now has all of the outward appearances of a deeply embedded rhetorical ritual, lawyers and judges routinely combine an argument for specific jurisdiction with one for general jurisdiction as if the two were “paired in the voting,” thinking that one or the other must apply, but darned if they know which one. And given the case law, who can blame them?

In addition, the problem of whether courts are entitled to take institutional and systemic interests, including sovereignty interests, into account in resolving jurisdictional disputes has never been adequately resolved. Here, the doctrine is predictable; the Court definitely will take such interests into account, but a serious question remains as to the legitimacy of doing so. Similarly, in many jurisdictions it is no longer clear whether defendant forum contacts are a necessary condition for extra-territorial jurisdiction. The “fairness factors,” codified in Woodson and refined in Burger King, have become an independent jurisdictional test for many courts, while for others they may be used only to bolster or weaken a defendant’s purposeful contacts with the forum. But whatever their role, they lack an internal structure and order of their own so that it is not possible to tell whether some factors are more important than others, if so, which ones, how much of one factor it takes to offset how

574. Burger King was the Court’s last major discussion of the “minimum contacts” standard. Burnham post-dates Burger King, but it was about transient jurisdiction.
much of another, and whether this analysis is different for rich and poor defendants.

Finally, modern formulations of the purposefulness requirement, an essential ingredient of all types of jurisdictionally relevant forum contacts, are all over the lot. Individual courts seem to have an almost limitless number of ways of expressing the idea, some treating it as a synonym for purely foreseeable defendant connections with a forum, and others seeing it as a requirement of willful and consciously directed in-state activity on the part of a defendant. Whatever their form, however, these definitions do little more than delegate discretion to individual judges to find purposefulness (or its absence) wherever they want to, causing what was once a central unifying feature of the defendant-veto view of personal jurisdiction to lose all doctrinal power. The "minimum contacts" standard was once a wonderfully simple two-factor, four-permutation formula that gave clear guidance in almost all cases, but in the years since International Shoe it has become almost fractal—rough, irregular, and fragmented—constantly reproducing itself at increasingly smaller levels of scope and usefulness, and no longer representable by any classical formula. Benoit Mandlebrot might welcome this development, but litigants and lawyers need more than irregular shapes and vague shadows to find their way through the maze of the American jurisdiction system, and only the Supreme Court can show the way. It is time for the Court to clear up the personal jurisdiction standard once again.

575. Even contacts used to support general jurisdiction are purposeful, though courts do not discuss them in this way, since it is not possible to be domiciled or incorporated in a state by accident, or establish a principal place of business in a non-purposeful way.