SUPREME COURT OF THE UNITED STATES

IN THE SUPREME COURT	OF THE UNITED STATES
303 CREATIVE LLC, ET AL.,)
Petitioners,)
v.) No. 21-476
AUBREY ELENIS, ET AL.,)
Respondents.)

Pages: 1 through 154

Place: Washington, D.C.

Date: December 5, 2022

HERITAGE REPORTING CORPORATION

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8		
9		
10	Washington,	D.C.
11	Monday, December	5, 2022
12		
13	The above-entitled matt	er came on for
14	oral argument before the Supre	me Court of the
15	United States at 10:01 a.m.	
16		
17	APPEARANCES:	
18	KRISTEN K. WAGGONER, ESQUIRE,	Washington, D.C.; on
19	behalf of the Petitioners.	
20	ERIC R. OLSON, Solicitor Gener	al, Denver, Colorado; on
21	behalf of the Respondents.	
22	BRIAN H. FLETCHER, Deputy Soli	citor General,
23	Department of Justice, Was	hington, D.C.; for
24	the United States, as amic	us curiae, supporting
25	the Respondents.	

1	CONTENTS	
2	ORAL ARGUMENT OF:	PAGE:
3	KRISTEN K. WAGGONER, ESQ.	
4	On behalf of the Petitioners	3
5	ORAL ARGUMENT OF:	
6	ERIC R. OLSON, ESQ.	
7	On behalf of the Respondents	57
8	ORAL ARGUMENT OF:	
9	BRIAN H. FLETCHER, ESQ.	
10	For the United States, as amicus	
11	curiae, supporting the Respondents	108
12	REBUTTAL ARGUMENT OF:	
13	KRISTEN K. WAGGONER, ESQ.	
14	On behalf of the Petitioners	149
15		
16		
17		
18		
19		
20		
21		
22		
23		
24		
25		

1	PROCEEDINGS
2	(10:01 a.m.)
3	CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: We'll hear
4	argument first this morning in Case 21-476, 303
5	Creative LLC versus Elenis.
6	Ms. Waggoner.
7	ORAL ARGUMENT OF KRISTEN K. WAGGONER
8	ON BEHALF OF THE PETITIONERS
9	MS. WAGGONER: Mr. Chief Justice, and
10	may it please the Court:
11	Lorie Smith blends art with technology
12	to create custom messages using words and
13	graphics. She serves all people, deciding what
14	to create based on the message, not who requests
15	it. But Colorado declares her speech a public
16	accommodation and insists that she create and
17	speak messages that violate her conscience.
18	This Court rejects such
19	government-compelled speech. In Hurley, the
20	Court considered a very similar issue, asking
21	two questions: Is there speech, and is the
22	message affected? That test is easily met here.
23	Colorado agrees Ms. Smith creates speech, and
24	the law undeniably affects her message. She's
25	not asking this Court to create new law but to

- 1 apply its precedent.
- 2 Colorado first says this case is about
- 3 a sale. It's not just about a sale. The state
- 4 forces Ms. Smith to create speech, not simply
- 5 sell it.
- 6 Next, Colorado says it can compel
- 7 speech on the same topic. But Ms. Smith
- 8 believes opposite-sex marriage honors scripture
- 9 and same-sex marriage contradicts it. If the
- 10 government can label this speech equivalent, it
- 11 can do so for any speech, whether religious or
- 12 political. Under Colorado's theory,
- jurisdictions could force a Democrat publicist
- 14 to write a Republican's press release.
- 15 Colorado's last resort is to argue
- 16 that it can at least compel the same expression.
- 17 But even the same expression can mean different
- 18 things, like a black sculptor who carves a
- 19 custom cross to celebrate a Catholic baptism but
- 20 not an Aryan church rally.
- 21 If the government may not force
- 22 motorists to display a motto, school children to
- 23 say a pledge, or parades to include banners,
- 24 Colorado may not force Ms. Smith to create and
- 25 speak messages on pain of investigation, fine,

- 1 and re-education.
- 2 I welcome this Court's questions.
- JUSTICE THOMAS: Counsel, would you
- 4 spend just a few minutes on whether or not this
- 5 -- your case is ripe?
- 6 MS. WAGGONER: Sure. This Court has
- 7 considered pre-enforcement challenges before,
- 8 and, in those contexts, it has looked at the
- 9 facts. This is one of the strongest
- 10 pre-enforcement cases, I think, that this Court
- 11 has considered in that the parties have
- 12 stipulated every message that Ms. Smith would
- create has a unique, customized message and that
- 14 it celebrates a wedding and celebrates a
- 15 marriage.
- It's also difficult to imagine a
- 17 scenario where there is a more aggressive
- 18 enforcement history by Colorado. Ms. Smith's
- 19 speech has been chilled. For six years, she has
- 20 been unable to speak in the marketplace. She's
- 21 ready to do so today, and she's ready to post
- her website statement today, which makes this
- 23 case ripe.
- JUSTICE KAGAN: Ms. Waggoner, unless
- 25 you're not through with that -- sorry. Your --

1	MS. WAGGONER: I'm through.
2	JUSTICE KAGAN: Okay.
3	MS. WAGGONER: Thank you.
4	JUSTICE KAGAN: Can I give you a
5	hypothetical? It's not really a hypothetical,
6	because I happen to have two clerks in my
7	chambers this year who are engaged, so, in
8	looking at this case and preparing this case, I
9	looked at their websites.
10	And so the hypothetical is about,
11	like, I'm going to call it the standard website.
12	They both have their names on it, the date of
13	the wedding, a picture of the couple. Then
14	there are a bunch of places that you can click
15	to, and one is the schedule of events and the
16	other is travel and hotel arrangements, and
17	another is favorite things to do in town while
18	you're here, and another is registry.
19	So that's what most websites look
20	like, yeah? And they're not particularly
21	ideological and they're not particularly
22	religious. They're not particularly anything,
23	all right?
24	And and then there's a tag line
25	just like the tag line in this case about sort

- of who created the website or whose graphics and
- design and typefaces and so forth were used in
- 3 the website.
- 4 And so one of them says -- I'm going
- 5 to substitute a woman's name just to not
- 6 advertise -- but one of them says, Made By Love
- 7 With Amber by -- Made With Love By Amber, right?
- 8 It's actually bigger than the 303 tag line.
- 9 So I guess what I want to know is
- 10 suppose Amber wakes up tomorrow morning and
- 11 says, you know what, I don't want to do those
- websites anymore for same-sex couples.
- 13 Could she do that?
- MS. WAGGONER: In terms of creating
- 15 new websites?
- 16 JUSTICE KAGAN: No, you know, like
- she's providing these templates and she has all
- 18 these designs and -- and -- and typefaces and --
- and that's what people use when they create
- 20 their own website because they give her the date
- 21 and they give her the -- the -- you know, the --
- the list of hotels and so forth.
- So can Amber wake up and just say no
- 24 more gay couples?
- MS. WAGGONER: She can't say no more

- 1 gay couples, but a speaker does have the ability
- 2 to decide not to speak under the law, but I
- 3 think the hypothetical that you're mentioning is
- 4 assuming that it's a plug-and-play website
- 5 essentially, that this website is already made
- 6 and that the speech creator isn't making any
- 7 additions to it.
- JUSTICE KAGAN: No, no, no.
- 9 MS. WAGGONER: But compelled --
- JUSTICE KAGAN: I mean, you know, just
- 11 like -- I -- I mean, I have to think that your
- 12 client does something similar. You have lots of
- graphics, you have, you know, typefaces, and,
- 14 you know, maybe, you know, some are a little bit
- more you talk to the client and some are a
- 16 little bit less you talk to the client.
- But, basically, you know, clients are
- 18 coming in and they're saying, we just want a
- 19 standard website, you know, that tells people
- 20 where to stay and what -- how to travel there
- 21 and -- and, you know, what our favorite things
- 22 to do are.
- 23 And -- and the question is, can a
- 24 website designer say, sorry, that's not my kind
- 25 of marriage?

1	MS. WAGGONER: The website designer
2	JUSTICE KAGAN: There's no scripture,
3	there's no ideology, there's no nothing.
4	MS. WAGGONER: There is ideology. And
5	this Court has already recognized that there is
6	ideology and different views on marriage. And
7	the Court's promise in Obergefell is to protect
8	those who would believe marriage is between a
9	man and a woman from having to express a view
10	that violates their conscience. But I think
11	JUSTICE KAGAN: Okay. So I think that
12	if I understand you, you're saying, yes, she can
13	refuse because there's ideology just in the fact
14	that it's Mike and Harry and there's a picture
15	of these two guys together.
16	MS. WAGGONER: That is speech. You
17	are announcing a wedding. And if you believe
18	the wedding to be false, then the the
19	government would be compelling you to say
20	something that you otherwise wouldn't say, which
21	makes it
22	JUSTICE KAGAN: So
23	MS. WAGGONER: content-based.
24	JUSTICE KAGAN: so it's really
) E	nothing about the gentent of this grouph T

- 1 mean, it could be Mike and Pat and you don't
- 2 actually even know whether Pat is a woman or a
- 3 man. There's really nothing about the content
- 4 of this speech, am -- am I right?
- In your case, you have, like,
- 6 scripture examples and so that might, you know,
- 7 be different maybe, but you're being forthright
- 8 and saying it's really not about that, it's
- 9 nothing about the content of the speech. It's
- 10 just that the content is being -- what --
- 11 what -- whatever the graphics and typefaces and,
- 12 you know -- you know, which hotels are -- you
- know, have been reserved for the wedding, it's
- 14 being used in a same-sex marriage.
- MS. WAGGONER: No, it's not about the
- 16 use. It -- what it's about when a person is
- creating speech, it is what is the message that
- they are expressing. The Hurley framework asked
- 19 this Court to first look at is their speech, and
- there clearly is words, graphics, text, videos,
- 21 pictures, that's speech and it's generally
- 22 protected.
- The second is to ask is the speaker's
- 24 message affected. And when you're requiring a
- 25 speaker to create a message to celebrate

- 1 something that they believe to be false, you're
- 2 compelling their speech and it's affecting their
- 3 message.
- 4 JUSTICE JACKSON: So their message is
- 5 not actually the content of the website. I
- 6 mean, this is Justice Kagan's point. We could
- 7 have a situation in which the identical website
- 8 is being offered, one to Harry and Ann and one
- 9 to Harry and Steve, but everything on the
- 10 website is exactly the same.
- I think I hear you saying that the
- message that the designer would be sending when
- she offered the website to Harry and Steve would
- 14 be different and contrary to her beliefs, and
- so -- so it's -- it's the implicit message that
- she's endorsing that wedding --
- MS. WAGGONER: No.
- 18 JUSTICE JACKSON: -- that's the
- 19 problem.
- MS. WAGGONER: No, she's not -- it's
- 21 not about whether she's endorsing it. She's not
- 22 speaking through anything but creating a speech.
- 23 And when you switch out those names, you're
- 24 switching out the concept and the message that
- 25 is actually in the website. Think of an example

1 2 JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: Where? 3 MS. WAGGONER: -- of God bless this 4 marriage. 5 JUSTICE ALITO: Suppose that be a --JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: Well, that's --6 7 that's a particular message, but I looked to your proposed website, and I turn to page 51. 8 It says Save The Date, Lilly and Luke, November 9 17, 2017. 10 11 So what's the message if it says, Save 12 The Date, Lilly and -- Lilly and Lillian or 13 Lilly and Mary? What's the message there? 14 MS. WAGGONER: That's an invitation to 15 celebrate a marriage, and --16 JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: But why is it your 17 invitation? I go to a wedding website. It's 18 something that I send, meaning you, your client, 19 I send it to my family and friends or Lilly and Luke send it to their family and friends. You 20 21 don't send it. They go to this website. You're 2.2 not inviting them to the wedding. Lilly and 23 Mary are. So how does it become your message? 24 MS. WAGGONER: In the same way that it

is the message of a ghostwriter who writes an

- 1 anonymous press release or a book. It is still
- 2 that writer's speech. The whole point of the
- 3 Compelled Speech Doctrine is to ensure that in
- 4 --
- JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: So what's the
- 6 limiting line of yours -- of yours? Justice
- 7 Kagan asked you about another website designer.
- 8 But how about people who don't believe in
- 9 interracial marriage or about people who don't
- 10 believe that disabled people should get married?
- 11 What's -- where's the line? I choose
- 12 to serve whom I want. If I disagree with their
- 13 personal characteristics, like race or
- 14 disability, I can choose not to sell to those
- 15 people --
- MS. WAGGONER: Not at --
- 17 JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: -- this website --
- MS. WAGGONER: -- not --
- 19 JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: -- because it's my
- 20 speech?
- MS. WAGGONER: -- not at all, Your
- 22 Honor. The Hurley framework provides that in a
- 23 public accommodation context, the first thing
- the Court looks at is, is the speech creator
- 25 otherwise serving those in a protected class and

- 1 expressing other messages.
- In the context of race, it's highly
- 3 unlikely that anyone would be serving black
- 4 Americans in other capacities but only refusing
- 5 to do so in an interracial marriage context --
- JUSTICE KAGAN: Well, it's not
- 7 impossible.
- 8 MS. WAGGONER: -- but --
- 9 JUSTICE ALITO: Suppose -- suppose we
- 10 agreed that the website designer could not
- 11 refuse to provide that service to a same-sex
- 12 couple if the website is of the kind that
- 13 Justice Kagan described.
- What does that say about the
- particular case that is before us on stipulated
- 16 facts?
- 17 MS. WAGGONER: Well, it would say that
- 18 the Court isn't considering those facts because
- 19 that's not this case that's presented to them,
- 20 but, at the same time, even that website --
- JUSTICE ALITO: Well, so what are the
- 22 differences between -- what differences do you
- see between her hypothetical and the actual case
- 24 that is before us?
- MS. WAGGONER: She provided a number

- of hypotheticals, so in terms of assuming it's a
- 2 --
- JUSTICE KAGAN: Just one, Ms.
- 4 Waggoner.
- 5 MS. WAGGONER: -- website --
- 6 JUSTICE ALITO: The hypothetical where
- 7 there is a website and, basically, all the --
- 8 the website operator does is to put in the names
- 9 of the two people who are getting married.
- 10 MS. WAGGONER: That's not a service
- 11 that -- or a speech creation that Ms. Smith
- 12 provides, but, if she did provide that, if it's
- a plug-and-play website where the couple, for
- 14 example, is putting in their names and -- and
- using their website, then you don't have
- 16 compelled speech because you don't have a speech
- 17 creator.
- 18 But even in the context of putting in
- 19 names --
- 20 JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: I'm sorry. Show
- 21 me on your website, show me in -- on the pages
- 22 of your petition for a writ of certiorari, show
- 23 me a page on that website that is an endorsement
- of a marriage as opposed to the story of a
- 25 couple.

- 1 MS. WAGGONER: Well, either one 2 violates the Compelled Speech Doctrine. 3 JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: No, no, no. MS. WAGGONER: You can't --4 JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: Please show me a 5 6 page on your website that's attached to your 7 petition. I'll start you on page 51. MS. WAGGONER: Pages 53, 52, 54 --8 9 JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: Okay. But leave this --10 11 MS. WAGGONER: -- 55 and 56 all 12 represent an invitation to celebrate --13 JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: Fifty-three says 14 "our photo gallery." Fifty-four says "funny 15 dating story." How is that your story, your 16 photo gallery? 17 MS. WAGGONER: Fifty --18 JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: It's the couple's 19 photo gallery. Page 54 is "funny dating story." 20 It's their story, not your story. 21 I'm looking at every page, and,
- 24 Fifty-three is RSVP. Our photo gallery.

22

23

25 Fifty-four is a funny dating story. I keep

basically, it's the story of the couple. It's a

date on page 51. Fifty-two is our special day.

- 1 looking at all of the mockups and all of them
- 2 relate to what Lilly and Luke are saying or
- doing, who they are, who are their grooms, who
- 4 aren't their -- who's their bridesmaids. I
- 5 don't understand. How is this your story? It's
- 6 their story.
- 7 MS. WAGGONER: If you're asking
- 8 whether -- first of all, book authors, newspaper
- 9 editors, those who write all kinds of
- 10 publications may be writing about someone else's
- 11 story, but it's still their speech, and it's
- 12 still protected --
- JUSTICE JACKSON: But they're not
- 14 public accommodations in the same way.
- JUSTICE BARRETT: Ms. Waggoner, can I
- 16 ask you --
- MS. WAGGONER: But they --
- JUSTICE BARRETT: -- a question about
- 19 a heterosexual couple? So, in response to
- Justice Sotomayor's questions, I took it that
- 21 your website where you say why a wedding
- 22 website, you go through and it seems like
- 23 careful, Ms. Smith was careful to say things
- like I fully customize the look, feel, theme,
- 25 message, color palettes, et cetera. And then

- 1 there's the engagement story page and inspired
- 2 by -- "a page inspired by you and written by
- 3 Lorie that captures and conveys the cherished
- 4 storybook of your love."
- 5 So I want to ask you a hypothetical
- 6 about a heterosexual couple that comes to your
- 7 client, and their wedding story, you know, that
- 8 they want to write under the engagement story
- 9 page goes like this: We are both cisgender and
- 10 heterosexual, but that is irrelevant to our
- 11 relationship which transcends such categories.
- 12 We knew we were soulmates from the moment that
- we met and on and on.
- 14 Would your client publish that site?
- MS. WAGGONER: Yes, she would publish
- 16 the site because her objection -- assuming that
- 17 the marriage is between a man and a woman, she
- 18 would publish it and that there's no
- 19 message that she objected --
- 20 JUSTICE BARRETT: Even though that
- 21 narrative, I assume, is inconsistent with her
- 22 biblical views about marriage? I'll give you
- 23 another related one. A heterosexual couple
- 24 comes to her and in the engagement story part
- 25 writes a story that goes like this: We met at

- 1 work, we were both married to other people, but
- what began as late nights at the office quickly
- 3 turned into love. After six months, we realized
- 4 we could be happy only with each other, so we
- 5 decided to begin our story today, got divorced,
- 6 and are marrying each other.
- 7 Does she publish it?
- 8 MS. WAGGONER: I don't believe that
- 9 she would. I also don't believe that she would
- 10 embrace or express a message that would
- 11 essentially say it doesn't matter whether there
- is a marriage between a man and a woman. She
- wouldn't create that speech either.
- JUSTICE BARRETT: So it's about the
- 15 message and not about the sexuality of the
- 16 couple that asked her to express it that
- 17 matters?
- MS. WAGGONER: Yes, which is exactly
- 19 how the Court decided the case in Hurley, but
- 20 it's also in other cases as well, the Pacific
- 21 Gas and Miami Herald cases. This Court has
- 22 routinely looked at compelled speech cases to
- 23 determine if the message --
- JUSTICE BARRETT: And, Ms. Waggoner,
- 25 can I just ask you to clarify before we move on?

- 1 When I first asked you the question about the
- 2 cisgender heterosexual couple, you said you
- 3 thought she would publish it, but then it seemed
- 4 like you wavered and said something different a
- 5 minute ago.
- 6 MS. WAGGONER: If I could just clarify
- 7 the hypothetical. The second part of the
- 8 statement was that it didn't matter? Is -- is
- 9 that --
- 10 JUSTICE BARRETT: That concepts of
- 11 gender or, you know, sexual orientation were
- irrelevant to their relationship because they
- 13 believed that those categories don't matter.
- 14 What matters is their union of souls.
- MS. WAGGONER: No, she would not
- 16 create a website that would say that because
- 17 that would violate her beliefs about what
- 18 scripture holds on marriage, in the same way,
- 19 though, this law and the Compelled Speech
- 20 Doctrine protects the LGBT website designer, who
- 21 won't be forced to have to create a website
- 22 essentially advocating for a view of marriage
- that they don't hold.
- 24 JUSTICE KAGAN: Can I ask not just --
- JUSTICE GORSUCH: Well, what do we --

```
1
     what do we do --
 2
                JUSTICE KAGAN: -- and this is --
 3
                JUSTICE GORSUCH: -- what do we -- I'm
 4
      sorry. No.
 5
               JUSTICE KAGAN: No, go ahead.
 6
               JUSTICE GORSUCH: No, no, please.
 7
                JUSTICE KAGAN: No, no, no.
                CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Justice --
 8
     Justice Gorsuch?
 9
10
                (Laughter.)
11
                JUSTICE GORSUCH: I -- I -- I 'm
12
      sorry.
13
                JUSTICE KAGAN: No, no, no.
14
                JUSTICE GORSUCH: One can view these
15
     websites, or last time around we had cakes, as
16
      either expressing the maker's point of view or
17
      the couple's point of view, and -- and that's
18
     really at -- at the heart of a lot of this. And
19
      I quess I'm -- I'm a little confused because
20
      sometimes, as I -- as I understand it, you're
21
      saying inherently here it is my client's point
22
      of view and not just the couple's point of view.
23
      I'm being compelled to speak. I get it.
24
               And sometimes Colorado agrees with
25
     you, for example, when it comes to the example
```

2.2

- 1 you just gave, which is why it popped up. I
- 2 believe it was William Jack in -- in the
- 3 Masterpiece Cake example where Colorado said he
- 4 didn't have to create cakes that -- that spoke
- 5 against same-sex marriage, that that would be
- 6 his compelled speech, not just the couple's
- 7 speech.
- 8 So what do we do about this level of
- 9 generality problem, if you will, where people
- 10 slide back and forth based upon their priors?
- 11 How do we avoid that as a Court? What rule
- 12 would you have us draw?
- MS. WAGGONER: The Court should follow
- 14 a rule that says, if the speech is being created
- and there's an objection and that objection is
- 16 contained in the message, it is protected speech
- 17 and the government can't --
- JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: So please --
- MS. WAGGONER: -- slide up and down --
- JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: -- tell me why
- 21 it's not protected speech, the identical message
- 22 that -- that Justice Barrett put forth, but by a
- 23 disabled couple. And you say I don't want
- 24 disabled people to get married. I think
- 25 propagating a disability is against my personal

- 1 belief. It doesn't have to be religious because
- 2 we're not dealing with the religious part of
- 3 this. I don't want to speak that message. I
- 4 too believe that two disabled people getting
- 5 married and telling their story of how they got
- 6 in love, I'm not going to serve those people
- 7 because I don't believe --
- 8 MS. WAGGONER: It's not --
- 9 JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: -- that they
- 10 should be married. What's the difference
- 11 between that and I don't believe black people
- 12 and white people should get married?
- MS. WAGGONER: What matters is what
- 14 the objection is that the speaker is being asked
- 15 to create and whether the objection --
- 16 JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: But -- but, if I
- just -- that's my objection. I don't believe
- 18 they should be telling their story.
- MS. WAGGONER: If you don't believe
- 20 they should be telling their story and what
- 21 they're asking you to do is tell their story,
- then you don't have to do that, in the same way
- 23 --
- JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: So it doesn't
- 25 really -- there is no line on race, there is no

```
1
      line on disability, ethnicity, none of the
 2
     protected categories --
 3
               MS. WAGGONER: That's --
               JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: -- in a public
 4
 5
     accommodation law?
 6
               MS. WAGGONER: There is a line.
7
      There's a very clear line, and it's worked --
               JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: Well, tell me --
 8
               MS. WAGGONER: -- very well.
 9
               JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: -- what the clear
10
11
      line is. It's compelled --
12
               MS. WAGGONER: The clear --
13
               JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: You're saying it's
14
      compelled speech, correct, not compelled
15
      service?
16
               MS. WAGGONER: I'm saying that in the
17
     public accommodation cases, this Court has
18
      routinely looked at whether there's speech and
19
     whether the message is affected and whether the
20
      objection lines up with the final speech.
```

- JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: But the one -- one
- 22 line --
- MS. WAGGONER: That --
- JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: -- that you're
- 25 missing is Justice Gorsuch's line. Whose speech

1	
2	MS. WAGGONER: The Pulitzer
3	JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: is the person
4	viewing it going to think is talking? You
5	MS. WAGGONER: The Pulitzer Prize
6	doesn't go to the customer or to the subject; it
7	goes to the photographer, and there's a reason
8	for that. That reason is because you are
9	requiring that artist to speak a message. It is
10	their work. It might also be the customer's and
11	the customer can use that.
12	But the First Amendment is broad
13	enough to cover the lesbian website designer and
14	the Catholic calligrapher. The line is that no
15	one on any side of any debate has to be
16	compelled to express a message that violates
17	their core convictions because, as this Court
18	found, it's demeaning to them.
19	JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: But the line you
20	want us
21	JUSTICE JACKSON: So can I
22	JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: I'm sorry.
23	JUSTICE JACKSON: can I ask you a
24	hypothetical that just sort of helps me to flesh
) E	that out? Degayar I also board you suggest

- 1 earlier that there's something different about
- 2 race, maybe the person wouldn't sell to someone
- 3 of a different race.
- 4 So -- so suppose -- you say that
- 5 photography is expressive. Can you give me your
- 6 thoughts on a photography business in a shopping
- 7 mall during this holiday season that offers a
- 8 product called Scenes with Santa, and this
- 9 business wants to express its own view of
- 10 nostalgia about Christmases past by reproducing
- 11 classic 1940s and 1950s Santa scenes. They do
- it in sepia tone and they are customizing each
- one. This is not off a rack. They're really
- 14 bringing the people in and having them interact
- with Santa, children, because they're trying to
- 16 capture the feelings of a certain era.
- But precisely because they're trying
- 18 to capture -- capture the feelings of a certain
- 19 era, their policy is that only white children
- 20 can be photographed with Santa in this way
- 21 because that's how they view the scenes with
- 22 Santa that they're trying to depict.
- Now the business will gladly refer
- 24 families of color to the Santa at the other end
- of the mall who will take anybody, but -- and --

- 1 and they will photograph families of color in
- other scenes -- other scenes, so they're not
- 3 discriminating against the families. What
- 4 they're saying is scenes with Santa is preserved
- 5 for white families and they want to have a sign
- 6 next to the Santa that says "only white
- 7 children."
- 8 Why isn't your argument that they
- 9 should be able to do that? And maybe it is?
- 10 MS. WAGGONER: Because, in the
- 11 photograph itself, the objection is not
- 12 contained in that photograph. But, in addition,
- 13 I think it's important to remind the Court that
- 14 --
- JUSTICE JACKSON: No, no, no, don't
- leave. Sorry, what do you mean? I mean, the
- 17 objection, just like your client's objection, is
- 18 to expressions that violate their own views of
- 19 what is being depicted, and so their view of
- 20 what is being depicted is that a scene with
- 21 Santa and a child on the lap and all of that in
- 22 sepia tone, trying to harken back to the good
- old days, should only have white children in it.
- 24 That's their firm belief. They are not willing
- to take photographs of black, Hispanic, Asian

- 1 children on Santa's lap.
- Why is that any different than a
- 3 situation like this?
- 4 MS. WAGGONER: Because the specific
- 5 objection that you're including is not
- 6 necessarily in that photograph, but even if it
- 7 were, this Court has protected vile, awful,
- 8 reprehensible, violent speech in the past, and
- 9 it has never --
- 10 JUSTICE JACKSON: No, I'm just asking
- 11 you why is the objection of the web designer, as
- 12 Justice both Kagan and Sotomayor's pointed out,
- when we look at your examples, they just say
- 14 things like "Please come to the wedding on this
- 15 day."
- MS. WAGGONER: Precisely. It's an
- 17 invitation to a wedding --
- 18 JUSTICE JACKSON: Okay. So I --
- MS. WAGGONER: -- which --
- JUSTICE JACKSON: -- so -- so, if my
- 21 hypothetical is an invitation to join me in the
- 22 1950s through looking at this photo, you say one
- 23 is different?
- MS. WAGGONER: I say that that same
- 25 clarity of the message isn't in that photo, but

- 1 there are difficult lines to draw and that may
- 2 be an edge case, but this is not. We have a
- 3 creative -- a creator of speech and a very
- 4 clear message --
- 5 JUSTICE KAGAN: It may be an edge case
- 6 meaning it could fall on either side, you're not
- 7 sure?
- 8 MS. WAGGONER: I am -- I am sure in
- 9 that the message isn't in the product. It's not
- in the photograph. But even if this Court were
- 11 to find that it was, the Court would still have
- 12 to protect the speech and the Court could draw a
- line in a different place, as it has juxtaposed
- 14 Loving and Obergefell in terms of the beliefs
- 15 between same-sex marriage. But it --
- JUSTICE KAGAN: So just --
- 17 JUSTICE ALITO: In --
- 18 JUSTICE KAGAN: Sorry.
- 19 JUSTICE ALITO: -- in Obergefell, did
- 20 the Court say that religious objections to
- 21 same-sex marriage are the same thing as
- 22 religious or other objections to people of
- 23 color?
- MS. WAGGONER: No. In fact, it said
- 25 that decent and honorable people hold beliefs

- 1 about marriage, believing that there's a
- gender-differentiated marriage and that that's
- 3 based on reasonable religious and philosophical
- 4 premises.
- When we review Loving, there's a very
- 6 different --
- 7 JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: But tell me how to
- 8 write this decision for you that draws the line
- 9 just on gay marriage, because that's what you
- seem to be saying right now, but draws a line
- 11 that doesn't affect my example of a disabled
- 12 person or an interracial couple.
- You're saying it's just because it's
- 14 compelled speech.
- MS. WAGGONER: I'm saying that the
- interracial couple, the disabled person, the
- 17 lesbian graphic designer, the Democrat, the
- 18 Republican, no one should be compelled to speak
- 19 a message. And this Court has never found a
- 20 compelling interest that was narrowly
- 21 tailored --
- JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: So you -- you're
- 23 -- you're saying a print shop, a web designer,
- 24 a -- a cake maker, a --
- JUSTICE JACKSON: A photographer.

1 JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: -- a jewelry -- a 2 photographer, a jewelry maker, they can refuse 3 to serve anyone they want to refuse because they have a deeply felt belief that serving -- taking 4 pictures of black couples, black and white 5 couples, taking pictures of disabled people, 6 7 people are going to believe that they're 8 speaking that message? 9 MS. WAGGONER: I'm not saying that at What I'm saying is that in every free 10 11 speech case the Court looks first is there 12 In many of the situations you've 13 raised, there would not be speech. 14 JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: But why not? 15 saying your identical website, and I don't see a 16 page in here where it says I am speaking, 303. 17 That's on your personal website. It's not on 18 the wedding website. I've asked you to show me 19 where, in which pages, it's your message as 20 opposed to the couple's message. 21 MS. WAGGONER: Every page is my 2.2 client's message --23 JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: But that --24 MS. WAGGONER: -- just as in a 25 newspaper that hosts an op-ed written by someone

1 else --2 JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: So why doesn't the 3 4 MS. WAGGONER: -- or Hurley, the 5 parade. 6 JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: But then why does 7 an off-the-shelf website -- the creator of an off-the-shelf website is then speaking? That's 8 9 what you're saying. 10 MS. WAGGONER: No, because the 11 Compelled Speech Doctrine doesn't apply once 12 you've entered that speech into the stream of 13 commerce. When the speech is completed, the 14 Compelled Speech Doctrine no longer applies. 15 But, in addition, there are 20 states that have 16 filed an amicus brief in this case and said they 17 are right now using their public accommodation 18 laws to allow message-based protections, as 19 Hurley would require, and they're not 20 experiencing these issues. And in --21 JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: But you're not 2.2 asking for that. You're saying, I don't want to 23 serve a particular person, a disabled person, a 24 black and white couple, a disabled couple, a --

a gay couple. You're basing it not on the

- 1 nature of the message, you're basing it on who
- 2 you're serving.
- 3 MS. WAGGONER: That's -- I don't think
- 4 that's a fair characterization. The stipulated
- facts in this case are that Ms. Smith has LGBT
- 6 clients. She serves them regularly. She has
- 7 all kinds of clients.
- JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: Tell me how that's
- 9 different, by the way. What you're basically
- 10 saying is, in our Ollie's Barbecue case, the
- 11 company there said, I'll serve blacks but only
- on a takeout window, not inside my restaurant
- because that sends a message that I endorse
- 14 integration.
- 15 MS. WAGGONER: Ms. Smith isn't looking
- 16 to send a message through her conduct.
- 17 JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: No, she -- what
- 18 you're saying is, I want to give gay couples a
- 19 limited menu, not a full menu, just the way that
- 20 luncheonette said.
- 21 MS. WAGGONER: No. Just as this Court
- found in Hurley, she's being asked to shape her
- 23 speech by a third party and it's -- again, it's
- about what message that she is creating. In
- Ollie's Barbecue, they weren't engaging --

1 JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: Well, when I sit 2 down to eat a meal by a full chef who creates 3 this beautiful picture on a plate, why can't he say, I make specialized meals for my clients. I 4 will not serve a black person. I won't serve a 5 6 disabled person because they can't appreciate 7 fully what I'm creating. That's basically what 8 you're saying. MS. WAGGONER: No, I don't think it is 9 what I'm saying. We're conflating service and 10 11 speech in that instance. A chef isn't --12 JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: But why is yours 13 not a service? 14 MS. WAGGONER: May I answer the 15 question? 16 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Yes. 17 MS. WAGGONER: Because it is creating 18 speech. And the public accommodation law is 19 broad enough to ensure that we're not crushing consciences not just of Ms. Smith but of her 20 21 LGBT friends. 2.2 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Thank you, 23 counsel. If your client's website -- yeah, don't go. Not so fast. 24

(Laughter.)

- 1 MS. WAGGONER: A new way of doing it. 2 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: If your -- if 3 your client's website was the same as it is, but the only indication of any limitation was a tag 4 5 line at the end saying these services are for 6 heterosexual couples only, could that 7 constitutionally be applied under the Colorado 8 statute? 9 MS. WAGGONER: The speech could be compelled if you're suggesting that she 10 11 essentially has a "no customers only" sign. And 12 that's exactly --13 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: No, no. Well, 14 no -- as in your case, no websites. No websites 15 are available for -- except for heterosexual
- 17 MS. WAGGONER: For marriage?
- 18 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Yeah, same
- 19 thing.

couples.

- MS. WAGGONER: Generally speaking, no.
- 21 In Ms. Smith's particular case, all of her
- 22 websites are created, they're original,
- 23 customized to the story, and so, in that
- instance, she believes same-sex marriage to be
- 25 false and couldn't create the speech.

1 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Okay. What if 2 it said, I won't provide websites for anything 3 other than heterosexual marriages because of religious reasons? Could that be covered, or is 4 it simply the invocation of religious basis for 5 6 the objection that protects it from coverage 7 under the statute? MS. WAGGONER: The religious basis is 8 not determinative here. This Court has provided 9 broad protection for religious speech, but it --10 it wouldn't matter. This -- this Compelled 11 12 Speech Doctrine applies in a host of situations 13 and cases that are not religious. 14 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: I quess I 15 don't understand that answer. In other words, 16 is it simply adding for religious reasons to the 17 label that would change whether it could be regulated or not? 18 19 MS. WAGGONER: I think what's 20 important is that the objection is to the message she's being asked to create. And so, if 21 2.2 she believes she's being asked to create a 23 message that violates her convictions, whether those convictions are based on a moral reason or 24 25 a religious reason, it would be protected.

1	CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Okay. Thank
2	you.
3	Justice Thomas?
4	Justice Alito?
5	Justice Sotomayor?
6	Justice Kagan?
7	JUSTICE KAGAN: Yeah. I I wanted
8	to take you back to my opening questions and
9	then Justice Alito's question about how your
10	case is different from my hypothetical, and
11	maybe the way to sort of cut through some of
12	this is to not make it a hypothetical and just
13	ask about your client.
14	So Mike and Mary go into your client,
15	we love your graphics, we saw them someplace
16	else, we love how this looks. Here's what we
17	want. We want the standard site, our names, our
18	the picture, the hotels, the registry, you
19	know, just just that.
20	And you say okay, don't you?
21	MS. WAGGONER: Yes, assuming all the
22	details line up with the message that she's
23	willing to create.
24	JUSTICE KAGAN: Yeah. I mean, then
25	they say we don't want your scripture. That's

- 1 all right with you? They don't have to have
- 2 scripture?
- MS. WAGGONER: No, they do not.
- 4 JUSTICE KAGAN: Yeah. They can just
- 5 have a standard site, right? Okay.
- 6 So now it's not Mike and Mary. Now
- 7 it's Mike and Mark, and they want the identical
- 8 site. We saw Mike and Mary's site. We loved
- 9 it. We're getting married, you know -- you
- 10 know, all they want to change is the date maybe
- or, you know, their names, whatever. We loved
- 12 it. And -- and they don't get it.
- 13 And the question -- and -- and you say
- 14 no, right? You -- you -- you wouldn't be up
- there if you weren't going to say no, right?
- 16 They can't get that site.
- 17 MS. WAGGONER: Yes, because the same
- words can even convey different meanings.
- 19 JUSTICE KAGAN: Yeah. So then -- I
- 20 mean, the difference is one couple is opposite
- 21 sex, one couple is same sex. How is this -- you
- 22 know, what -- what are the different meanings?
- 23 What is the speech that your client is
- 24 expected -- is -- is required to provide in the
- 25 way I expressed it to you?

1 MS. WAGGONER: The purpose of the 2 websites is to celebrate an upcoming wedding. 3 It's to announce a wedding. And so --JUSTICE KAGAN: It is to announce a 4 wedding. I mean, let's -- this is a standard 5 6 site. You know, there's not a whole lot of, 7 gosh, isn't this great? It's just like here's 8 the registry, you know. It's announcing the 9 wedding. It's announcing where to get the hotel reservations and so forth, right? 10 11 So what speech is being -- I mean, 12 that's -- that's what -- that's what websites 13 do, just like it's what invitations do, right? 14 So, you know, next, we'll have the stationer up 15 there, saying, you know, we print the station --16 the stationery, right? I mean, it would be the 17 same. It is announcing the wedding. 18 What's the speech that's been required 19 of your client that we -- I mean, I'm going to 20 have lots of questions for these guys too, but, in -- in that context, what is the speech that 21 2.2 is required of your client that would violate 23 the First Amendment? She believes that 24 MS. WAGGONER: 25 same-sex weddings contradict scripture and she's

- 1 announcing a concept of marriage that she
- 2 believes to be false. And, in addition to that,
- 3 even --
- 4 JUSTICE KAGAN: I mean, but that just
- 5 sounds to me like I would be participating in a
- 6 wedding, I would be, you know, lending my
- 7 services to a wedding. You know, as Justice
- 8 Sotomayor suggested, the florist, the baker, and
- 9 the guy who provides the chairs are also
- 10 providing the services in a wedding that they
- 11 don't like. So why are they any different?
- MS. WAGGONER: The person providing
- the chairs isn't providing speech, but when
- 14 you're engaging in symbolic speech, whether that
- 15 be through the creation of a custom wedding cake
- or a custom wedding website, you are creating
- 17 speech. I can't --
- 18 JUSTICE KAGAN: Even though the site
- 19 doesn't say anything about that? It doesn't
- say, wow, gay marriage is a wonderful thing. It
- 21 doesn't say -- it doesn't even say, you know,
- 22 we're here to celebrate this wonderful marriage
- in my hypothetical. It doesn't even say that.
- MS. WAGGONER: Again, the announcement
- of the wedding itself is a concept that she

- 1 believes to be false. And the entire purpose
- 2 behind the Compelled Speech Doctrine is to avoid
- 3 these ends by avoiding these beginnings. It's
- 4 to ensure that individuals don't speak messages
- 5 that betray their conscience, and that applies
- 6 just as much to the Democrat as to the LGBT or
- 7 the black cross sculptor.
- 8 JUSTICE KAGAN: Thank you.
- 9 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Justice
- 10 Gorsuch?
- JUSTICE GORSUCH: So, counsel, we've
- 12 spoken a little bit about how Colorado has
- 13 handled this compelled speech question
- 14 differently with respect to different messages,
- some that it prefers, others that it dislikes.
- 16 I'm curious how other states have
- 17 dealt with this conundrum besides Colorado and
- 18 how you -- which ones of those you think we
- 19 should take account of.
- 20 MS. WAGGONER: Twenty states filed an
- 21 amicus brief in support of Ms. Smith
- and expressed to this Court that they're
- 23 applying their public accommodation law to
- 24 provide message-based object -- protections,
- 25 just like the Court did in Hurley, following the

- 1 same test that's being articulated today, and
- they've been doing it successfully.
- 3 Yes, there are difficult line-drawing
- 4 questions, but those are in every speech case,
- 5 whether it's sleeping in the park or putting on
- 6 an arm band. The Court doesn't have to resolve
- 7 every single one of them, but we do have the
- 8 rules, and we need the Court to provide
- 9 guidance, again, reaffirming public
- 10 accommodation laws cannot compel speech
- 11 creators, whether that's artistic expression
- 12 with symbols or pure speech.
- JUSTICE GORSUCH: And just so I make
- 14 sure I understood your colloquy with Justice
- 15 Barrett, the objections to compelled speech on
- 16 religious grounds could include, in fact, do
- 17 include, some objections with respect to certain
- 18 heterosexual marriages, that there are certain
- 19 heterosexual unions that your client would not
- 20 speak toward either, is that correct?
- MS. WAGGONER: Certainly, and that's
- 22 in the stipulated facts in terms of she declines
- 23 messages based on the message, and she has
- 24 declined other projects based on the message
- 25 that have nothing to do with same-sex marriage.

_	00511CE GONDOCII: 50 CHE quescion
2	isn't who, it's what?
3	MS. WAGGONER: Always.
4	JUSTICE GORSUCH: Thank you.
5	CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Justice
6	Kavanaugh?
7	JUSTICE KAVANAUGH: From the briefs, I
8	saw a lot of agreement actually between the
9	parties in this case on basic legal principles.
10	In your reply brief, page 15, you say that
11	hairstylists, landscapers, plumbers, caterers,
12	tailors, jewelers, and restaurants ordinarily
13	wouldn't have a First Amendment free speech
14	right to decline to serve a same-sex wedding.
15	At least that's how I read that reference in
16	your brief. But you say artists are different,
17	like publishing houses. And I think the other
18	side I'll hear from them but agree that
19	artists are different because of the First
20	Amendment rights that artists possess.
21	But then, at least as I read the
22	briefs, the case comes down to a fairly narrower
23	narrow question of, how do you characterize
24	website designers? Are they more like the
25	restaurants and the jewelers and the tailors, or

- 1 are they more like, you know, the publishing
- 2 houses and the other free speech analogues that
- 3 are raised on the other side?
- 4 That's what I took away from the
- 5 briefs. A lot of agreement on broad legal
- 6 principles and some disagreement about how to
- 7 characterize the website designers. So why are
- 8 you right about how you characterize website
- 9 designers or, put another way, why are they
- 10 different -- and you've gotten this question --
- 11 but why are they different from, say,
- 12 restaurants or caterers, for example?
- MS. WAGGONER: Because they're
- 14 creating speech. In those other examples,
- speech is not at issue, that is creating speech,
- announcing a wedding, or announcing anything.
- 17 And art is different. And so, while there may
- 18 be agreement on that, there also is a problem
- 19 with Colorado's advancing theories that keep
- 20 narrowing and providing alternatives.
- But, in the end, one thing is certain:
- 22 Those who object to same-sex marriage and
- creating messages about them, those are the ones
- that can't speak, but everyone else seems to be
- able to do so under Colorado's theory.

1	In addition, this Court has already
2	articulated how we determine whether speech is
3	involved for an artist, and I think the Court
4	could follow those tests here, with words,
5	graphics, videos, and, again, symbolic speech.
6	JUSTICE KAVANAUGH: So, for you, as
7	as there's an effort to protect both the equal
8	rights of gay and lesbian people and same-sex
9	couples and at the same time protect free speech
10	rights, your line is look at whether the action
11	of the business involves speech?
12	MS. WAGGONER: And the second line
13	would be to look at what is the objection that
14	the creator is asserting and would that actually
15	be in the final product, because that's how this
16	Court has ferreted out pretextual objections.
17	So, if a if a speech creator articulates an
18	objection and it's not in that final photograph,
19	the objection or the the message isn't in
20	there, that's one way we can know. Another is
21	if they're refusing to serve an entire class of
22	people and design other messages, none of which
23	are true here. But I do
24	JUSTICE KAVANAUGH: So, if you win
25	this case, if you prevail here, you know, and

- 1 the next case involves a caterer, at least your
- 2 position here is that's different.
- 3 MS. WAGGONER: I won't be coming back
- 4 with the caterer, but I will be coming back with
- 5 perhaps a custom wedding cake or a cake --
- 6 JUSTICE KAVANAUGH: I understand that,
- 7 but the --
- 8 MS. WAGGONER: -- that has a symbolic
- 9 meaning to it.
- 10 JUSTICE KAVANAUGH: Okay. But the --
- 11 the caterer, the -- the list of things that you
- 12 had on page 15 of the reply brief, at least
- ordinarily -- you had a caveat in there -- but
- ordinarily wouldn't -- wouldn't have the same
- 15 right that your client here does, who's a
- 16 website designer?
- 17 MS. WAGGONER: They wouldn't have a
- 18 free speech right. And as -- in terms of your
- initial statement about the parties agreeing, I
- do think it's important, on pages 17 and 32 of
- 21 the United States' brief, they're even conceding
- that it's a burden on a speaker to have to
- 23 express a message that violates their
- 24 convictions. They're just simply relabeling
- 25 this or repackaging speech as a sale or conduct.

1	JUSTICE KAVANAUGH: Thank you.
2	CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Justice
3	Barrett?
4	JUSTICE BARRETT: So I think the
5	questions that Justice Kagan asked you are hard
6	because they seem like they're not creating. I
7	mean, you're on your strongest ground when
8	you're talking about her sitting down and
9	designing and coming up with the graphics to
10	customize them for the couple. So let me just
11	clarify exactly what your position is on things
12	that are already created in the past.
13	What if it is plug-and-play? I don't
14	know that much about website design, so I don't
15	know how it could be plug-and-play. I'm sure i
16	can be. She she does the programming, the
17	coding. She has stock pictures. And she sells
18	that as a product, and the customers, you know,
19	Mike and Henry or, you know, Lilly and Luke,
20	fill it in themselves. Is that protected?
21	MS. WAGGONER: It is not protected in
22	the same way that if you sold a Bible
23	commentary, you wouldn't be able to decide
24	whether the Bible commentary will be burned or
25	it will be used in a church service. The stream

- of commerce, it's been put in the stream of
- 2 commerce.
- JUSTICE BARRETT: Okay. So why is it
- 4 different? Justice Kagan said, so maybe you do
- 5 create customized websites and you've created
- one for, you know, Lilly and Luke, and then, you
- 7 know, Mike and Henry see it and say, you've
- 8 created that already, we love it, we want to buy
- 9 it. Don't create anything new for us. Just
- 10 give us exactly what you did for them.
- 11 Why is that different than plug and
- 12 play, or is it?
- 13 MS. WAGGONER: It is different. I
- mean, first of all, if I take your hypothetical
- on its face, we would be selling essentially a
- 16 web -- she would be creating a website that's
- 17 exactly the same with the same pictures and text
- 18 and graphics and videos of an opposite sex
- 19 couple and selling it to a same-sex couple,
- 20 which seems highly unlikely they would use that
- 21 to celebrate their wedding.
- 22 So, in terms of if you're asking her
- 23 to change the text, to change the logistics, to
- 24 change the names, you're changing bride and
- groom. You're changing the couple's name.

- 1 You're changing -- we know context changes
- 2 meaning.
- 3 Justice Ginsburg said that in Yates
- 4 versus United States. Even the same words have
- 5 different meaning. "God bless this marriage"
- 6 means something different. "My body, my choice"
- 7 means something different to an anti-vaxxer or a
- 8 pro-abortion opponent -- or proponent.
- 9 So, in -- in that sense, that's why
- she would object if she were changing the words
- in the text, but, of course, she would sell the
- same website celebrating an opposite-sex wedding
- 13 to a same-sex couple.
- 14 JUSTICE BARRETT: Okay. So context
- changes meaning. What if, instead of a graphic
- designer, she's a songwriter and she writes a
- song, you know, let's say "At Last or "Wind
- 18 Beneath My Wings" or something that people want
- 19 to dance to at their wedding, and the lyrics are
- out there. You know, it could be played at a
- 21 heterosexual wedding or it could be played at a
- 22 gay wedding. Once the artist has created that
- song, can the artist say, but I'm not licensing
- it to be played at certain kinds of weddings?
- MS. WAGGONER: No, I don't think the

- 1 artist could. I'm not familiar with the
- 2 licensing rules and how all that would apply in
- 3 terms of the contractual relationship, but in
- 4 terms of just having a song used at a wedding,
- 5 assuming that would otherwise be okay, there's
- 6 no other legal rights, she couldn't. That was
- 7 in the stream of commerce.
- 8 But I think it's important to point
- 9 out that if that artist were being asked to
- 10 perform that song in a live way, for example,
- 11 sang at a Democratic inauguration and they were
- 12 asked to perform at the Republican one, under
- 13 Colorado's theory, they could be compelled to do
- 14 so in a number of jurisdictions. Nineteen
- jurisdictions have political ideology. And when
- 16 we think about that, there's no limit to what
- 17 the government could compel.
- 18 JUSTICE BARRETT: Thank you.
- 19 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Justice
- 20 Jackson?
- 21 JUSTICE JACKSON: But isn't an artist
- 22 typically sort of a -- a freelancer and they are
- 23 selling their own messages? They're not
- 24 purporting to be a business for hire in -- in --
- in any meaningful sense. And so I -- I want to

- 1 kind of go back to Justice Kavanaugh's thought
- of, like, where do we place your client as
- 3 between, you know, restaurants and artists.
- I thought that there really isn't that
- 5 clear a distinction in a situation like this
- 6 because your client is an artist for hire
- 7 essentially. Yes, she does customize things,
- 8 they're not off the shelf, but she purports to
- 9 be a public accommodation providing customized
- things to anyone who pays her, except for people
- 11 whose messages are those that she disagrees
- 12 with.
- 13 And I just don't know that I've ever
- seen that kind of scenario, even in the cases
- that you're talking about, because sort of what
- 16 Justice Gorsuch was saying, it's -- it's relying
- on the implicit message that she does not want
- 18 to convey by supporting this person.
- There's an explicit message in the
- 20 actual work, but to the extent that actual work
- 21 is identical to the -- to the work that she
- 22 would otherwise sell to the gay couple except
- for their names, then she is implicitly saying,
- 24 you know, by selling this, I'm going to be
- violating my own beliefs.

1 So let me just ask you another quick 2 hypo. So I -- I'm trying to understand the 3 extent to which this matters that she's a speaker as opposed to a restaurant. So I sell 4 food, and one line of products that I make is 5 6 from scratch for particular customers that are 7 based on my grandmother's cherished family 8 recipes. 9 My dearly departed grandmother was 10 clear that she only wanted to provide this kind 11 of nourishment for people who share our same 12 religious heritage. So I call these products 13 Grandma Helen's Protestant Provisions. And I 14 sit with each customer who comes in and I hear 15 about their faith and their family, and I 16 customize the recipe for them after having this 17 discussion. 18 So the food is not expressive, right? 19 I'm not speaking in my food, but I am trying to convey that only certain people get to partake 20 in this product. Can I do that consistent with 21 2.2 the First Amendment or not? MS. WAGGONER: No, and in -- and in a 23 24 situation as you said, in terms of a caterer, 25 the caterer is not engaging in speech. In terms

- of your initial statements or questions, speech
- is speech whether it's paid or pro bono.
- JUSTICE JACKSON: But -- but aren't --
- 4 don't we have cases that suggest that people's
- 5 conduct can be expressive? I thought there was
- 6 a whole line of cases that said you didn't have
- 7 to actually have an express message, you could
- 8 be acting in such a way as to express a message.
- 9 And in my restaurant hypo, I'm saying,
- if I sell to non-Protestants, I'd be expressing
- 11 a message contrary to Grandma Helen's core
- 12 beliefs.
- MS. WAGGONER: You're speaking through
- 14 conduct at that point, and that is a different
- 15 analysis. In terms of the expressive conduct
- 16 test, the Court has already articulated what
- 17 those tests are and what a reasonable person
- 18 would observe.
- But, in that case, you're talking
- 20 essentially about status discrimination.
- 21 There's no message that she is creating that
- 22 would be compelled in that way. That would
- 23 simply be service.
- In addition, though, I think it's
- 25 important to recognize the breadth of the public

- 1 accommodation law. You started with a statement
- 2 about freelance writers. At oral argument at
- 3 the Tenth Circuit, my friend in Colorado
- 4 admitted that freelance writers are considered
- 5 to be public accommodations under this law as --
- 6 JUSTICE JACKSON: All right. Well,
- 7 I'll ask them about that. But what about my
- 8 photographer? My photographer is speaking
- 9 through photography, yes?
- 10 MS. WAGGONER: In -- in your
- 11 photography, yes, photography is speech --
- 12 JUSTICE JACKSON: Is speech.
- MS. WAGGONER: -- just as websites are
- 14 under the Court's decision in Reno.
- JUSTICE JACKSON: All right. So my
- 16 photographer could -- is speaking by -- by being
- forced to create a Santa photo with minority
- 18 children in it that they don't want to, they
- 19 don't think that should be there?
- 20 MS. WAGGONER: The issue in that
- 21 hypothetical isn't whether there is speech. The
- issue is, in that context, are they otherwise
- 23 serving those and expressing other messages and
- does the objection that they're asserting line
- 25 up with the message.

1 The Court in Hurley did the exact same 2 analysis to say is the parade organizers otherwise in -- otherwise --3 JUSTICE JACKSON: But Hurley was a 4 private association. It wasn't a public 5 6 business. What I'm asking you is I have a 7 public business, I'm a photographer. My belief is that -- you know, I'm doing "It's a Wonderful 8 Life" scenes. That's what I'm offering, okay? 9 10 I want to do video depictions of "It's a 11 Wonderful Life." 12 And I -- knowing that movie very well, I want to be authentic, and so only white 13 children and families can be customers for that 14 15 particular product. Everybody else can -- I'll 16 give to everybody else, I'll sell them anything 17 they want, just not the "It's a Wonderful Life" 18 depictions. 19 I'm expressing something, right? For 20 your purposes, that's speech. What about -what's the other step? It's speech, and I can 21 2.2 say anti-discrimination laws can't make me sell 23 the "It's a Wonderful Life" package to nonwhite individuals. 24 25 MS. WAGGONER: In the same way -- I --

- 1 I would say, first of all, in the same way that
- 2 this Court, when there is a message and a status
- and it's overlapping, the Court would say that
- 4 message wins in that instance. I don't think
- 5 that the message --
- 6 JUSTICE JACKSON: So -- so -- so I
- 7 don't have to sell it to --
- 8 MS. WAGGONER: -- I don't think that
- 9 that message is in that hypothetical. But take
- 10 the example of the musical of "Hamilton."
- 11 There's a direct overlap in the musical of
- 12 "Hamilton." And, in that case, we know that
- they're expressing a preference for who they're
- 14 hiring in terms of race. Yet we would say that
- 15 --
- 16 JUSTICE JACKSON: No, I'm not talking
- 17 about -- you're -- you're sort of slipping into,
- 18 like, a thousand different analogies. I just
- 19 want -- I just want you to focus on whether or
- 20 not I am -- I have speech when I am a
- 21 photography business and I hang out my shingle.
- 22 Everybody can come, but I have certain products
- 23 that I'll only sell to non -- to -- to white
- 24 individuals because the speech that I'm trying
- 25 to depict is the authentic depiction of that

- 1 scene as I understand it and that I want to put
- 2 out there in the world and it has my signature
- 3 on the bottom of it, so people are seeing my
- 4 photos and I want my photos of "It's a Wonderful
- 5 Life" to be as authentic as possible, meaning no
- 6 people of color.
- 7 MS. WAGGONER: It seems, in each
- 8 iteration of the hypothetical, the objection is
- 9 changing. What I can articulate is the test.
- 10 And I can also say that when there's an overlap
- 11 between message and status, message does win.
- 12 And "Hamilton" provides an example of that.
- 13 JUSTICE JACKSON: All right. Thank
- 14 you.
- MS. WAGGONER: But I -- I would --
- 16 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Thank you,
- 17 counsel.
- Mr. Olson.
- 19 ORAL ARGUMENT OF ERIC R. OLSON
- 20 ON BEHALF OF THE RESPONDENTS
- 21 MR. OLSON: Mr. Chief Justice, and may
- 22 it please the Court:
- The central dispute here is what
- 24 public accommodations law target when they
- 25 require a business to provide equal access to

- 1 its services. The company claims that because
- 2 it wants to sell websites, the law somehow
- 3 targets expression and therefore violates the
- 4 First Amendment.
- But, because Colorado law targets the
- 6 commercial conduct of discriminatory sales and
- 7 its effect on expression is at most incidental,
- 8 it easily satisfies the framework set out in
- 9 O'Brien.
- The company can choose to sell
- 11 websites that only feature biblical quotes
- describing a marriage as between a man and a
- 13 woman, just like a Christmas store can choose to
- sell only Christmas-related items. The company
- just cannot refuse to serve gay couples, as it
- seeks to do here, just as the Christmas store
- 17 cannot announce no Jews allowed.
- 18 Here, the company seeks a
- 19 pre-enforcement order allowing it to turn away
- 20 all gay couples, even if, as we've discussed,
- 21 the wedding website they request is identical to
- one the company would sell to a heterosexual
- 23 couple. Granting such a license to discriminate
- 24 would empower all businesses that offer what
- 25 they believe to be expressive services, from

- 1 architects to photographers to consultants, to
- 2 refuse service to customers because of their
- disability, sexual orientation, religion, or
- 4 race.
- 5 The Free Speech Clause exemption the
- 6 company seeks here is sweeping because it would
- 7 apply not just to sincerely held religious
- 8 beliefs, like those of the company and its
- 9 owner, but also to all sorts of racist, sexist,
- 10 and bigoted views. This rule would allow
- another web design company to say no interracial
- 12 couples served, an ad agency could refuse
- women-led businesses, and a tech consulting
- 14 company could refuse to serve 303 Creative
- itself because it disagreed with the owner's
- 16 religion.
- 17 This Court should not upend
- 18 long-settled law that protects the full and
- 19 equal access of all Americans to our public
- 20 marketplace.
- I welcome the Court's questions.
- JUSTICE THOMAS: Counsel, you've spent
- 23 quite a bit of your brief talking about the
- 24 history -- the tradition of public
- 25 accommodations laws. Would you just spend a few

- 1 minutes or whatever amount of time you can
- 2 explaining whether there is a similarly long
- 3 tradition of public accommodations laws applying
- 4 to speech?
- 5 MR. OLSON: Well --
- 6 JUSTICE THOMAS: Or expressive
- 7 conduct?
- 8 MR. OLSON: -- certainly, Justice
- 9 Thomas. The history of public accommodation
- 10 laws shows that when those held themselves open
- 11 to the public, they were required to serve every
- 12 --
- 13 JUSTICE THOMAS: I understand that. I
- 14 understand -- the complicating factor here --
- fact here is this is not a hotel, this is not a
- 16 restaurant, this is not a riverboat or a train.
- 17 I'm interested in the intersection of public
- 18 accommodations law and speech.
- 19 MR. OLSON: I think we see some public
- 20 accommodation law being applied to examples that
- 21 are speech today, tailors, barbers, et cetera.
- 22 But what we don't see over the long history of
- 23 public accommodation laws in this country is
- 24 people raising First Amendment speech objections
- 25 to those laws applying to it.

1 JUSTICE THOMAS: Well, I think that in 2 part depends upon whether or not you're engaging 3 in speech. If you're running a train business or a riverboat business, that's not exactly --4 doesn't implicate speech. So those are 5 straightforward. I understand that. 6 7 What I'm interested in is, when you are talking about public accommodations laws 8 9 directly or indirectly regulating speech, is there a tradition of that? Can you point to 10 11 cases? Can you point to common law treatises, 12 et cetera? So I think that the 13 MR. OLSON: 14 historical record is sparse on both sides, but 15 the two things I would say, Justice Thomas, is 16 what we don't see is a history of public 17 accommodation laws carving out speech. They all are laws of general applicability that apply to 18 19 all those operating a trade to the public. They 20 don't say except those engaged in expressive 21 conduct. 2.2 And with that framework, we do not see 23 a history of cases where people raise their hand 24 and say it shouldn't apply to me because I'm 25 speaking. And so I think the public

- 1 accommodations brief on our side in this case
- 2 sets that out quite nicely. But -- but there is
- 3 no case from 150 years ago that comes out either
- 4 way with this exact issue.
- 5 JUSTICE GORSUCH: Mr. Olson, I --
- 6 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Well, just --
- JUSTICE GORSUCH: I'm sorry, Chief.
- 8 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: No, not 150
- 9 years ago, but I think it's 10 or -- or -- or 12
- 10 years ago, in City of Fulton, which you cite in
- 11 your brief, it sort of follows up on Justice
- 12 Thomas's question, although you don't even get
- 13 to speech. I think the Court in that case said,
- when you're looking at some of the concerns that
- 15 you're talking about, that a individualized,
- 16 subjective, multifactor, whatever,
- 17 determination, in that case foster care and
- 18 adoption, is not the same as a seat on the bus
- 19 or a room in the hotel.
- 20 How -- how does your argument fit with
- 21 that position that was articulated in the Court
- 22 with respect to the nature of individual
- 23 speakers' message?
- 24 MR. OLSON: Well, I think those
- 25 questions are not presented in this case because

- 1 most artists are not public accommodations. But
- 2 my friend stipulated that the company was a
- 3 public accommodation, and often a lot of the
- 4 hypotheticals that we've been talking about,
- 5 about artists, and -- and, certainly, Lin-Manuel
- 6 Miranda, who is writing the play "Hamilton," is
- 7 not a --
- 8 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: But, in terms
- 9 of -- in terms of the concern expressed in a lot
- of our cases about compelled speech and the
- 11 distinction of others where you can have a
- 12 requirement of serving people without regard to
- 13 certain characteristics, the case did make the
- 14 point that to the extent there's subjective,
- individualized determinations that go into the
- decision about placing children, that it did
- 17 not -- that those cases were not, at least not
- 18 directly, applicable?
- 19 MR. OLSON: That's correct, Chief
- Justice Roberts. And I think, here, again, the
- 21 record is entirely devoid of those factors
- 22 because the company chose to litigate this case
- as a public accommodation. I think a lot of the
- 24 description that we heard today would be
- 25 powerful arguments that they may not be a public

- 1 accommodation in what they do, but we simply
- don't have those facts here. But, certainly,
- 3 the level of selectivity, the -- the way in
- 4 which the -- the potential customer engages with
- 5 the -- the client -- I'm sorry, with the service
- 6 provider, and how the service provider makes
- 7 their product available or -- or known to the
- 8 public all factor in in that analysis.
- 9 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Yeah, and I'd
- 10 like to ask you a question about one other case.
- 11 It's the one you rely on most heavily in your
- 12 brief, Rumsfeld against FAIR. And it seems to
- me that a distinction you have to deal with in
- 14 that case is that the speech there was not
- 15 compelled, or what was compelled was not
- 16 considered speech. It involved the schools
- 17 providing rooms for the military recruiter, and
- when it came to the question of compelled
- 19 speech, what the Court said is empty rooms don't
- 20 speak.
- 21 But, here, of course, the whole
- 22 argument is that the speech is being compelled.
- 23 So -- so how does the either holding or analysis
- in FAIR help you?
- MR. OLSON: Two responses, Chief

- 1 Justice. First is, in FAIR, it recognized that
- 2 there was some speech by the schools. There
- 3 were e-mails, posters on bulletin boards, et
- 4 cetera. So there was some speech, but it said
- 5 it was incidental, like in O'Brien, to the
- 6 purpose of the regulation, which was ensuring
- 7 equal access, similar to Colorado's law here.
- 8 And -- and the second point I would
- 9 make, and it comes from the example of the
- 10 identical website being turned away for the
- same-sex couple but provided to the opposite-sex
- 12 couple, here, sometimes the speech itself does
- 13 not change. And what this company seeks, if you
- 14 look at the -- the specific prayer for relief in
- the complaint, is a total permission to turn
- 16 away every same-sex couple, even if they seek
- 17 exactly the same website that an opposite-sex
- 18 couple that they will provide.
- 19 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Well, just to
- 20 -- just to stop you, their point is they do not
- 21 turn away same-sex couples who want the service
- 22 that they're providing. They just won't provide
- that service with respect to a particular type
- of wedding.
- MR. OLSON: I respectfully disagree,

- 1 Your Honor. What the company said is under no
- 2 circumstances will they provide a wedding
- 3 website for a same-sex wedding, period.
- 4 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Correct.
- 5 MR. OLSON: Right. And --
- 6 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: But that --
- 7 I'm sorry.
- 8 MR. OLSON: -- and that is
- 9 status-based discrimination when -- and it
- 10 doesn't matter whose credit card is used for
- 11 that transaction. What -- what -- the sole
- 12 basis that the company seeks relief from this
- 13 Court is they would like an injunction that says
- 14 so long as -- if this is going to be used for a
- same-sex wedding, then we need not provide it.
- 16 And so it's a status-based discrimination that
- 17 they seek from this Court.
- 18 JUSTICE ALITO: Let me see if I
- 19 understand your argument. I understand you to
- 20 be arguing that a website designer can put
- 21 anything it wants on a standardized website,
- 22 even if that includes a denunciation of same-sex
- 23 marriage. Is that correct?
- MR. OLSON: Yes.
- JUSTICE ALITO: So, if the -- to pick

- 1 up on Justice Kagan's hypothetical from earlier
- 2 this morning, if the standard announcement is
- 3 Made With Love by Amber, who believes that a
- 4 valid marriage is a union between one man and
- one woman, "that's okay?
- 6 MR. OLSON: If that's on every
- 7 website, yes.
- 8 JUSTICE ALITO: Then this is -- your
- 9 argument is -- you're making kind of a sliver of
- 10 an argument, right? What is the difference
- 11 between that and what you think is a violation
- 12 of your law?
- MR. OLSON: Two things, Justice Alito.
- 14 The first --
- JUSTICE ALITO: I mean, you're not --
- that website designer is not going to be serving
- a same-sex couple if the website designer puts
- 18 that on the website. They're turning away
- same-sex couples by doing that, are they not?
- 20 MR. OLSON: No, they're -- they're not
- 21 turning away same-sex couples. They are
- 22 defining their -- they are able to choose what
- 23 services they offer, and that is the service
- 24 they are choosing to offer.
- The state does not regulate that at

- 1 all. All that the state says is whatever you
- 2 choose to sell --
- JUSTICE ALITO: No, I understand that.
- 4 Does it any difference in the real world as a
- 5 practical matter?
- 6 MR. OLSON: Well, it -- it does in the
- 7 real world because a -- a -- my second point is
- 8 that a website designer like that will lose a
- 9 lot of opposite-sex couples as potential clients
- 10 as well because they don't want to be seen with
- 11 that message.
- 12 And what the company wants to do here
- is take advantage of the public marketplace, go
- out and sell their wares to everyone and have
- 15 control over -- and change what they sell to
- 16 different people based on the status of -- of
- 17 what they have.
- 18 JUSTICE ALITO: Okay. To --
- 19 MR. OLSON: And -- and --
- 20 JUSTICE ALITO: Yeah, I understand
- 21 that. So to sell to everyone. So this goes to
- 22 your -- to the interpretation of your statute,
- and I'm not quite clear what your position is on
- 24 it. If a business provides a service that is
- 25 "open to the public," it's a public

- 1 accommodation, right?
- 2 MR. OLSON: Yeah. You have to engage
- 3 in sales or offering services to the public,
- 4 yes.
- 5 JUSTICE ALITO: Okay. So what does
- 6 "open to the public" mean? Does that mean no
- 7 selectivity whatsoever? Anybody who wants this
- 8 service can get it and it may be, if there's a
- 9 greater demand, then the demand exceeds the
- 10 supply, you've got to wait in line. But, if
- 11 there's any selectivity at all, they're out?
- 12 MR. OLSON: Well, again, it's not
- 13 presented in this case. The way that Colorado
- 14 has historically addressed that question is --
- 15 are, say, golf clubs who had limited their
- 16 membership to one gender, you know, did they
- 17 make money from the public coming to their
- 18 courses, did they -- did you have to be a member
- 19 to dine in the restaurant, et cetera.
- 20 So selectivity as the Court discussed
- 21 in Fulton certainly is a factor, but it -- but
- 22 it is a -- a fact-specific determination that --
- that awaits more facts than we have here because
- 24 it can --
- JUSTICE ALITO: Well, you should

- 1 understand what your statute means. So suppose
- 2 a website designer says, I'm -- I'm offering my
- 3 services, but I'm really in -- I -- I'm in a lot
- 4 of demand for my services and I reserve the
- 5 right to decide who I will provide a website for
- 6 and who I will not.
- 7 Is it a public accommodation then?
- 8 MR. OLSON: If that's the only factor,
- 9 then yes, but it can make decisions about who to
- 10 supply that -- that aren't based on protected
- 11 characteristics and choose its clientele just
- 12 fine.
- 13 What it can't do is say I reserve the
- 14 right to refuse service which means in practice
- 15 I will not serve black people.
- JUSTICE JACKSON: And isn't part of
- 17 the problem here in terms of trying to answer
- 18 Justice Alito's various hypotheticals that were
- 19 presented with a record of stipulated facts and
- 20 that the opposing -- your friend on the other
- 21 side actually stipulated to the application of
- the statute?
- 23 So it's really hard for us to know and
- 24 figure out and determine in this context how the
- 25 statute would actually apply because we don't

- 1 really have a real record on that -- on that
- 2 score.
- 3 MR. OLSON: That's correct. And --
- 4 and I would say that we've heard some discussion
- from my friend about sort of Colorado's history,
- 6 but what we haven't heard is any specific
- 7 example since this Court announced Masterpiece
- 8 of Colorado enforcing this law, the state
- 9 enforcing this law against anyone to --
- 10 JUSTICE ALITO: Well, my question
- 11 really was not whether this website is a public
- 12 accommodation. I understand that's been
- 13 stipulated. That wasn't my question.
- 14 What I'm trying to understand is the
- breadth of your argument, and what I get is that
- 16 you're making a -- a tiny sliver of an argument.
- 17 So the website can put anything on its website,
- 18 even something that will blatantly or subtly
- 19 tell a same-sex couple, well, this is not a
- 20 service that I want. They can do that.
- 21 And a website can also potentially get
- 22 itself out from being a public accommodation
- 23 simply by reserving a degree of selectivity.
- 24 That's what you've told me so far.
- 25 MR. OLSON: No, I -- I don't think

- 1 it's just by reserving a degree -- degree of
- 2 selectivity, but I think it -- the more
- 3 selective and sort of curated the process is, it
- 4 makes it less likely to be a -- a public
- 5 accommodation, as the Court recognized in -- in
- 6 Fulton.
- JUSTICE ALITO: All right.
- 8 JUSTICE KAGAN: General --
- 9 JUSTICE ALITO: Let me ask you a --
- 10 a -- and then I'll finish this line.
- 11 Some hypotheticals in a brief
- 12 submitted by Josh Blackman, okay? A -- a Jewish
- man and a Jewish woman who are engaged to be
- married ask a Jewish website designer to build a
- 15 website to celebrate their upcoming -- their
- 16 nuptials. No problem. Okay?
- 17 Another Jewish man and a Christian
- woman who are engaged to be married ask a Jewish
- 19 website designer to build a website to celebrate
- 20 their -- their nuptials. Big problem. "Many
- 21 Jews consider intermarriage an existential
- threat to the future of Judaism."
- Does that website have to accept the
- 24 second couple?
- MR. OLSON: Again, as we talked about

- 1 before, if the Jewish website designer has, you
- 2 know, very explicitly Jewish themes on the --
- 3 the wedding, they don't need to -- on the
- 4 website, they don't need to take that down for
- 5 the -- the -- the interreligious couple that
- 6 comes. But they -- if they offer a general
- 7 service to the public, they need to offer that
- 8 regardless of the customer's religion.
- 9 JUSTICE ALITO: So the fact that they
- 10 offer this to -- that this is a Jewish -- that
- is offered mostly to Jews, that's enough to make
- it -- or exclusively to Jews, that's enough to
- make it sufficiently selective to get them out
- 14 from your --
- MR. OLSON: No. I'm -- I'm drawing a
- 16 distinction between what the website designer
- 17 chooses to put on the website and who the
- 18 website designer sells the website to.
- 19 The website designer can choose to put
- on their websites whatever they want, but they
- just can't refuse to sell -- if they're a public
- accommodation, they can't refuse to sell that
- 23 website to someone solely because of their --
- the customer's or the couple's religion.
- 25 JUSTICE ALITO: Okay. An unmarried

- 1 Jewish person asks a Jewish photographer to take
- 2 a photograph for his Jdate dating profile. It's
- 3 a dating service, I gather, for Jewish people.
- 4 JUSTICE KAGAN: It is.
- 5 (Laughter.)
- 6 JUSTICE ALITO: All right. Maybe
- 7 Justice Kagan will also be familiar with the
- 8 next website I'm going to mention.
- 9 So, next, a Jewish person asks a
- 10 Jewish photographer to take a photograph for his
- 11 ashleymadison.com dating profile.
- 12 (Laughter.)
- JUSTICE ALITO: I'm not suggesting
- that. I mean, she knows a lot of things. I'm
- not suggesting -- okay. Does he have to do it?
- MR. OLSON: Well, again, it would --
- it would -- what Colorado look -- it depends.
- 18 What Colorado looks to is what services the
- 19 photographer makes available to the public. And
- 20 if -- if the photographer makes that service
- 21 available to -- to others, taking pictures, you
- 22 know, for use on websites, then probably yes,
- 23 but it depends on --
- JUSTICE ALITO: Okay, Justice -- then
- 25 I really will stop.

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1
                Justice Jackson's example of the --
 2
      the Santa in the mall who doesn't want his
 3
     picture taken with black children, so if there's
     a -- a black Santa at the other end of the mall
 4
     and he doesn't want to have his picture taken
 5
 6
     with a child who's dressed up in a Ku Klux Klan
7
      outfit, that -- that black Santa has to do that?
               MR. OLSON: No, because Ku Klux Klan
 8
 9
     outfits are not protected characteristics under
10
     public accommodation laws.
11
                JUSTICE KAGAN: And, presumably, that
12
     would be the same Ku Klux Clan outfit regardless
     whether the child was black or white or any
13
14
      other characteristic.
15
                JUSTICE ALITO: You do see -- you do
16
      see a lot of black children in Ku Klux Klan
17
      outfits, right? All the -- all the time.
      Suppose that -- I mean --
18
19
                JUSTICE KAGAN: Can I -- can I -- can
20
      I --
21
               JUSTICE ALITO: Yeah.
                JUSTICE KAGAN: Yeah? Is that all
2.2
23
     right?
24
               JUSTICE ALITO: Sure.
25
                JUSTICE KAGAN: I have one, I -- I
```

- 1 hope, easy question for you and then a more
- 2 difficult question.
- 3 So, as I understand your argument, the
- 4 kind of you can say anything you want as long as
- 5 you say it to everybody or not say anything you
- 6 want as long as you don't say it to anybody.
- 7 So a gay couple walks in to Ms.
- 8 Smith's office and says, we want a quote from
- 9 Obergefell, and she says, I don't do that.
- That's okay with you, yes?
- MR. OLSON: Yes.
- 12 JUSTICE KAGAN: Because she doesn't do
- it for anybody, yeah?
- 14 MR. OLSON: Correct.
- 15 JUSTICE KAGAN: Okay. Gay couple
- 16 walks in and says -- this is the harder one, all
- 17 right? A gay couple walks in and says, I'd like
- 18 the standard website, you know, everything
- 19 standard, the kind of website we were talking
- about before, but I want something in addition
- 21 to that. I want -- I want in the -- on the home
- 22 page the website to say God Blesses This Union.
- 23 All right?
- 24 And Ms. Smith says -- that's a
- 25 problem, Ms. Smith says. And the gay couple

- 1 says, well, you would say that if -- if we were
- 2 an opposite-sex couple, right? And -- and she
- 3 says, we -- I would say that if you were an
- 4 opposite-sex couple.
- 5 And the gay couple says, well, what's
- 6 the big deal then? I don't know, I think that
- 7 that kind of is different, so I'm wondering
- 8 whether you think it's different.
- 9 MR. OLSON: Well, I -- I think it's
- 10 different in part because it implicates the very
- 11 compelling free exercise concerns of the vendor,
- which aren't present in this case, right? This
- is just a procedure --
- JUSTICE KAGAN: Yeah, possible. I get
- 15 the -- I get the idea that there's a kind of
- 16 religious element to it. I wish I could think
- 17 of one that didn't have that component because I
- 18 feel like there's something else going on there
- 19 as well, that it is a statement of opinion about
- the nature of this marriage, which, you know, in
- 21 my earlier hypotheticals I took care to remove.
- But now there's a kind of statement of
- opinion about the nature of this marriage, and
- 24 unlike the kind of "our story" things, which is
- like -- obviously, it's their story, it's not

- 1 the designer's story. You know, unlike that, it
- 2 feels a little bit to me as though it could be a
- 3 kind of third person saying God blesses this
- 4 union. And who would the third person be other
- 5 than the person who's put the whole website
- 6 together? So I have difficulty with that
- 7 hypothetical, and I'm wondering what you think
- 8 about it.
- 9 MR. OLSON: So I agree, Justice Kagan,
- 10 and I think -- imagine a statement that says
- 11 something along the lines of -- you know,
- 12 there's a dating website that meets people and
- then the people that they connect through it
- says, you know, this is a wonderful marriage
- 15 that we support. No religion, right?
- 16 And then where you have that direct
- 17 speech, it does get a little trickier, but --
- but I -- but what I would say is this is -- you
- 19 know, the default rule would still apply even
- though that is an edge case, I agree, because
- 21 the question is what services does the company
- 22 choose to provide and, if it chooses to provide
- 23 that service to some -- now, here, it's -- you
- 24 know, it may be that -- that looking at the
- 25 service is, well, I evaluate your marriage and I

- 1 give it a thumbs-up or a thumbs-down, and, you
- 2 know, I assume you don't want the thumbs-down on
- 3 the website, so if you get a thumbs-up, you get
- 4 on the website. So that's a fact question I
- 5 think that would be hard.
- 6 But, if it was a statement that was
- 7 made solely based on the status of the person
- 8 seeking the website, in other words, thumbs-up
- 9 for all opposite-sex couples, thumbs-down for --
- 10 for same-sex couples, then it's an easier --
- 11 easier question.
- 12 JUSTICE JACKSON: Isn't Justice --
- JUSTICE KAGAN: Yeah, I --
- 14 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Thank -- thank
- 15 you, counsel.
- Justice Thomas, anything further?
- 17 Justice Alito?
- JUSTICE ALITO: Well, back to my black
- 19 Santa example, suppose it's a state that defines
- 20 a public accomodation -- prohibits a public
- 21 accommodation to discriminate on the basis of
- 22 political ideology. So then -- then the picture
- 23 has to be taken?
- 24 MR. OLSON: I -- I think that is
- 25 likely -- those political ideology distinctions

- 1 face much more difficult constitutional scrutiny
- 2 and I think are separate in kind from the kind
- 3 of characteristics that we're talking about
- 4 here, which are categories of invidious
- 5 discrimination. I can only think, in most
- 6 circumstances, political ideology did not
- 7 satisfy the constitutional requirements.
- 8 JUSTICE ALITO: So it has to satisfy a
- 9 constitutional requirement? Your argument is
- 10 dependent on that?
- MR. OLSON: Yes, because even under
- 0'Brien, there's -- there's -- we have to show a
- 13 basis for what we're doing.
- 14 JUSTICE ALITO: In light of what
- Justice Kennedy wrote in Obergefell about
- 16 honorable people who object to same-sex
- marriage, do you think it's fair to equate
- opposition to same-sex marriage with opposition
- 19 to interracial marriage?
- 20 MR. OLSON: Yes, because -- in how the
- 21 law applies, not in -- in the -- the discussion
- 22 with folks because, of course, honorable people
- 23 have different views on this issue. But I
- think, when you look at what Justice Kennedy
- said there, the way to honor that requirement

- 1 is, as this Court has set forth in Fulton, in
- 2 Masterpiece, of having a rigorous interrogation
- 3 to make sure that there are neutral and
- 4 generally applicable laws applied in fact that
- 5 way that don't single out religion.
- 6 And then the very next sentence of
- 7 what Justice Kennedy said in Obergefell talked
- 8 about, when -- when it transformed, that honest
- 9 and decent disagreement transformed into enacted
- 10 law and policy, the necessary consequence is to
- 11 put the imprimatur of the state on that
- 12 exclusion. And I think, if this Court were to
- 13 say that the imprimatur of this Court would
- 14 allow a web designer to say no same-sex people
- 15 allowed or allow a school photographer to say,
- 16 you know, no pictures of --
- 17 JUSTICE ALITO: Well, do you think
- 18 Justice Kennedy would have said that there are
- 19 -- that it's honorable to oppose -- to
- 20 discriminate on the basis of race?
- MR. OLSON: No, I don't think so.
- JUSTICE ALITO: Let me just give you
- one -- one more hypothetical. Suppose someone
- 24 offers the service of writing customized wedding
- vows or customized speeches to be given at a

- 1 wedding by people who have an idea what they
- 2 would like to say about a family member or good
- 3 friend, but they just don't feel they're very
- 4 good with words. They can't put it into words.
- 5 And let's say that this outfit is just
- 6 starting up. They don't have a lot of clients.
- 7 They're sitting at -- you know, they're sitting
- 8 by the phone and their computer waiting for
- 9 somebody to show up, so they will take anybody.
- 10 All right? Can -- can they be forced to write
- 11 vows or speeches that espouse things they
- 12 loathe?
- MR. OLSON: No, they cannot be forced
- 14 to -- to write vows or speeches that espouse
- 15 things they loathe because that's not a
- 16 protected characteristic. But they cannot -- I
- 17 assume in your example --
- JUSTICE ALITO: Well, is -- is -- is
- 19 the prohibition or the limitation against
- 20 compelled speech limited to things that are
- 21 unconstitutional?
- MR. OLSON: No. I think -- I think
- 23 there are --
- 24 JUSTICE ALITO: So why does it matter?
- MR. OLSON: Well, because, here,

- 1 things they loathe is not a protected
- 2 characteristic anywhere I know -- anywhere that
- I know of, but on the constitutional limit, it
- 4 doesn't have --
- 5 JUSTICE ALITO: Okay. It doesn't fall
- 6 within -- you say -- you say it doesn't fall
- 7 within your statute. But maybe it's going to
- 8 fall within the statute -- it may fall within
- 9 another statute.
- 10 MR. OLSON: Under -- under any level
- of scrutiny here, you look at the state's
- 12 compelling interest in -- in -- in determining
- 13 the -- the burden -- the incidental burden on
- 14 the -- in our example, the vow writer's rights,
- and I don't know of any state that has sort of a
- 16 compelled -- it has the same compelling interest
- 17 as they do -- as they do for, you know,
- 18 protecting things that other people loathe as
- 19 they do for sex, gender, religion
- 20 discrimination. So I think it would be a
- 21 different analysis.
- 22 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Justice
- 23 Sotomayor?
- 24 JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: This would be the
- 25 first time in the Court's history, correct, that

- 1 it would say that a business open to the public,
- 2 as this Petitioner has said it is, that it's
- 3 open -- a commercial business open to the
- 4 public, serving the public, that it could refuse
- 5 to serve a customer based on race, sex,
- 6 religion, or sexual orientation, correct?
- 7 MR. OLSON: Yes.
- 8 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Justice Kagan?
- 9 Justice Gorsuch?
- 10 JUSTICE GORSUCH: Good morning,
- 11 Mr. Olson.
- MR. OLSON: Is it still morning?
- 13 JUSTICE GORSUCH: Just barely.
- 14 (Laughter.)
- 15 JUSTICE GORSUCH: It must not feel
- like it standing where you are.
- 17 (Laughter.)
- 18 MR. OLSON: I'm here all day, Justice
- 19 Gorsuch.
- 20 (Laughter.)
- JUSTICE GORSUCH: It's good to see
- 22 you. We -- we've had some discussion about
- 23 whether websites are speech or whether they are
- 24 some -- a service off the shelf. And I -- I --
- 25 I, like a lot of my colleagues, don't profess to

- 1 know much about this. But I do know that there
- 2 are some stipulations that you made in
- 3 paragraphs 81, 82, 83, which say that this is
- 4 customized, personalized, and expressive
- 5 activity in each and every circumstance.
- 6 What do we do about that from your
- 7 perspective? Don't we have to take that as
- 8 given?
- 9 MR. OLSON: Yes, but it doesn't change
- 10 the analysis, I think.
- JUSTICE GORSUCH: Why not? Because I
- do see a thing very different if I put a cake on
- display, it's been made, it is what it is, or a
- 14 website that you can then go customize yourself,
- and another thing to commission an expressive
- 16 activity and -- and -- and to require someone to
- 17 create an expression. Those are two different
- things analytically in our law. So help me out.
- 19 MR. OLSON: Well, I think, along with
- 20 the stipulations, we need to look at the
- 21 specific relief that the company seeks.
- JUSTICE GORSUCH: But those are the
- 23 stipulations.
- MR. OLSON: They are the stipulations.
- 25 And the specific relief that the company seeks

- 1 is the ability to turn away every single
- 2 same-sex customer.
- JUSTICE GORSUCH: Well, they can ask
- 4 for what they want. What they get might be
- 5 another thing, Mr. Olson. But how we analyze
- 6 the case depends upon those stipulations.
- 7 MR. OLSON: Of course, it does. And
- 8 -- and --
- 9 JUSTICE GORSUCH: Okay. Okay. And
- 10 then, separately, I -- I was intrigued by your
- answer before my friends at the Tenth Circuit
- 12 about freelance writers and people like that and
- 13 the notion that Colorado could compel, for
- 14 example, an individual to write a speech or a
- press release on behalf of, say, a religious
- 16 entity with whom he or she disagrees.
- Does -- does every press release
- writer, freelance writer have to write a press
- 19 release for the Church of Scientology, say, even
- 20 though the beliefs of that institution may be
- 21 inimical to that person?
- MR. OLSON: Not at all. And -- and I
- 23 admit I don't have firmly in mind the exact
- 24 contours of my answer a couple years ago to the
- 25 Tenth Circuit, but I will tell you what Colorado

- 1 law says, which is you -- a freelance writer may
- 2 or may not be a public accommodation --
- JUSTICE GORSUCH: Well, let's -- let's
- 4 assume they -- they are --
- 5 MR. OLSON: Okay.
- 6 JUSTICE GORSUCH: -- under your
- 7 definition, pretty broad, very different than
- 8 the historical understanding of public
- 9 accommodation, but we've gone over that.
- 10 MR. OLSON: So -- so assuming away
- 11 that hard part of the question, getting to -- to
- 12 what limitations, all that Colorado law requires
- is that if you choose to offer a service to
- someone, you need to offer that service to be
- 15 done --
- 16 JUSTICE GORSUCH: I offer to write
- 17 press releases for anyone. It's not a who, but
- 18 it is a what. And the what is, I won't write a
- 19 press release that expresses religious views or
- 20 that I disagree with.
- 21 MR. OLSON: Well -- well, I think,
- 22 certainly, a -- a freelance writer who is a
- 23 public accommodation could say, I don't write
- 24 press releases that express religious views,
- full stop, I won't write that for anybody.

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1
     Right? You -- you can --
 2
                JUSTICE GORSUCH: No, no, no, I'm --
 3
      I'm happy to do it generally speaking but just
     not ones I disagree with. There are many I
 4
     would agree with across a wide variety of
 5
     religious faiths, but I'm not going to do it for
 6
7
      some with whom I disagree.
                MR. OLSON: Well, even in that
 8
 9
      circumstance, what Colorado looks to is the
10
      service you actually provide and you choose the
11
      service so long as -- you -- you could say I --
12
      I --
13
                JUSTICE GORSUCH: So the answer is
14
     yes, Colorado would compel that person?
15
                MR. OLSON: No, no, the answer is no.
16
               JUSTICE GORSUCH: Okay, why?
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- 17 MR. OLSON: Because Colorado coul
- 17 MR. OLSON: Because Colorado could say
- 18 you as a -- as a speech writer could say, I
- 19 write -- you know, the religious speeches that I
- 20 write touch on a few traditions that I have
- 21 knowledge of and I don't write speeches that
- 22 touch on other knowledges. But you --
- JUSTICE GORSUCH: Well, no, no, no.
- 24 It's not on -- you're changing my hypothetical,
- 25 Mr. Olson --

1 MR. OLSON: Well --2 JUSTICE GORSUCH: -- that I disagree 3 with, that --4 MR. OLSON: Okay. JUSTICE GORSUCH: -- that I find 5 6 offensive to my religious beliefs. That's the 7 hypothetical. MR. OLSON: So long as you would sell 8 9 that to everyone, not based on their religion, 10 but you -- you can define the contours of the 11 product, you can choose the contours of the 12 product that you sell, but you --13 MR. GORSUCH: I call it -- I call it 14 speech, but you can call it a product if you 15 want. 16 MR. OLSON: Well, we'll -- we'll call 17 it speech. You -- you can choose the content 18 of -- of what you sell. You just can't --19 JUSTICE GORSUCH: What you say. 20 MR. OLSON: -- choose who you sell to. 21 JUSTICE GORSUCH: Okay. 2.2 MR. OLSON: Right? And so you could 23 say, I'm going to -- I'm going to focus on these 24 things and -- but I need to sell that to 25 everyone even if the person who wants to buy it

- 1 is a member of a religious faith that I disagree
- 2 with. That gets by --
- JUSTICE GORSUCH: So I will -- I will
- 4 write a press release for many faiths and many
- 5 belief systems that are -- but they have to be
- 6 consistent with mine and I won't do it if it --
- 7 if it offends my religious faith. Good to go?
- 8 MR. OLSON: So long as you sell that
- 9 to everybody.
- 10 JUSTICE GORSUCH: Yes. Okay. All
- 11 right. What's different about this case?
- 12 Because -- I'll just finish the question. I
- know you're already ready to answer it. But we
- 14 have an individual who says she will sell and
- does sell to everyone all manner of websites.
- But she won't sell a website that
- 17 requires her to express a view about marriage
- 18 that she finds offensive to her religious
- 19 beliefs. What's the difference between the two
- 20 cases? I'm struggling to understand.
- MR. OLSON: The difference is, and,
- 22 again, looking at the specific relief the
- 23 company seeks, is --
- 24 JUSTICE GORSUCH: Put aside the
- 25 specific relief the company seeks because it's

- 1 up to courts to fashion relief.
- 2 MR. OLSON: Yeah.
- JUSTICE GORSUCH: So that's -- that's
- 4 not going to persuade me. Work on something
- 5 that might.
- 6 MR. OLSON: The difference is, is that
- 7 that distinction the -- well, the company has
- 8 chosen to say they want to provide wedding
- 9 websites generally and they will not provide --
- 10 JUSTICE GORSUCH: Well, all manner of
- 11 websites.
- 12 MR. OLSON: Well --
- JUSTICE GORSUCH: This individual will
- 14 provide all manner of websites, just not one
- 15 that celebrates -- requires her to write
- something, words on a page, customizable, all
- 17 the stuff you stipulated to, that celebrate a
- 18 particular thing that she finds offends her
- 19 religious beliefs.
- I -- I still -- I'm -- I'm looking for
- 21 the distinction between the two cases. One you
- 22 say is okay and the other one not okay.
- MR. OLSON: Because the company,
- 24 unlike our first example of the speech writer --
- JUSTICE GORSUCH: Yeah.

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1
                MR. OLSON: -- the company here says
 2
      in no uncertain terms will they ever sell a
 3
      company -- a -- a -- a product or a service
 4
      to a same-sex couple permitting that I --
 5
                JUSTICE GORSUCH: No, what they say is
 6
     we will not sell to anyone -- anyone a -- a
7
     message that I disagree with as a matter of
      religious faith, just as a speech writer says or
8
 9
      the press release writer, the freelance writer,
      says I will not sell to anyone a speech that
10
11
      offends my religious beliefs.
12
                MR. OLSON: But, here, they are
     defining their service by excluding someone
13
     based on their --
14
15
                JUSTICE GORSUCH: That's their
16
     religious belief.
17
               MR. OLSON: Well, in Colorado --
18
                JUSTICE GORSUCH: You can't change
19
     their religious belief, right?
20
                MR. OLSON: No, but -- but -- well,
21
      two --
2.2
                JUSTICE GORSUCH: And you protect
23
     religious beliefs under the statute, right?
24
      That is one of the protected characteristics in
25
      theory.
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MR. OLSON: Yes, and in practice. If 1 2 it wasn't in practice, we have heard about it 3 over -- over the past several years and -- and my friend has pointed to no example where this 4 has been applied in a --5 6 JUSTICE GORSUCH: Mr. Phillips did go 7 through a re-education training program pursuant to Colorado law, did he not, Mr. Olson? 8 9 MR. OLSON: He -- he went through a -a process that ensured he was familiar with --10 11 JUSTICE GORSUCH: It was a 12 re-education program, right? 13 MR. OLSON: It was not a re-education 14 program. 15 JUSTICE GORSUCH: What do you call it? 16 MR. OLSON: It was a process to make 17 sure he was familiar with Colorado law. 18 JUSTICE GORSUCH: Someone might be 19 excused for calling that a re-education program. 20 MR. OLSON: I strongly disagree, 21 Justice Gorsuch. 2.2 JUSTICE GORSUCH: Thank you, Mr. 23 Olson. CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Justice 24

25

Kavanaugh?

1	JUSTICE KAVANAUGH: I'm interested in
2	picking up on those questions and and what
3	Colorado's position on the First Amendment could
4	lead to, not what you would do based on your
5	representation, but what your theory of the
6	First Amendment could lead to in thinking about
7	the proper analogy to a website designer.
8	So I've been thinking about a
9	publishing house that says, we're not going to
10	publish we support pro choice positions.
11	We're not going to publish books that support a
12	pro life position or that we support same-sex
13	marriage and we're not going to publish books
14	that take a different position on same-sex
15	marriage.
16	Does the publishing house have a First
17	Amendment ability to select the kinds of books
18	that it will publish along the lines of my
19	hypotheticals there?
20	MR. OLSON: Of of course, it does,
21	and I think a publishing house is not a public
22	accommodation for precisely the level of
23	selectivity and choice that that it goes
24	into, just like the Court recognized in Fulton.
25	JUSTICE KAVANAUGH: Right. But, if it

- 1 were a public accommodation, it would still have
- 2 a First Amendment right, correct?
- 3 MR. OLSON: Yes.
- 4 JUSTICE KAVANAUGH: You sure about
- 5 that?
- 6 MR. OLSON: Yes, because what -- all
- 7 the public accommodation law says is you can't
- 8 turn someone away because of who they are.
- 9 And -- and it would be different if your
- 10 hypothetical was they will not publish gay
- 11 authors. If -- if they were -- if they were a
- 12 -- a publishing house who said they will -- will
- 13 not --
- JUSTICE KAVANAUGH: Right. That's the
- 15 distinction right there.
- 16 MR. OLSON: Yes.
- 17 JUSTICE KAVANAUGH: You put your
- 18 finger on it, I think. So the website designer
- is different from the publishing house how?
- 20 MR. OLSON: Because the website
- 21 designer is refusing to -- to publish gay
- authors using the publishing house example.
- 23 They are saying, I will not provide this service
- 24 to someone because of who they are, period.
- JUSTICE KAVANAUGH: They say it's

- 1 because of the message.
- 2 MR. OLSON: I -- I -- I understand,
- 3 but they define the service in a way that
- 4 excludes people based on who they are, and that
- 5 violates Colorado law.
- And to the extent there's some
- 7 incidental impact on their message, it's the
- 8 kind of incidental impact that this Court held
- 9 in O'Brien as to be appropriate, where a law is
- 10 focused on conduct and not the -- the message
- 11 itself.
- 12 JUSTICE KAVANAUGH: I felt the amicus
- 13 brief of Professors Carpenter and Volokh was
- 14 fairly interesting. They supported the same-sex
- position in Masterpiece but that they say
- they're on the opposite side in this case and
- they say that the reason is because this case
- involves speech.
- 19 They say a website designer is unlike
- 20 a baker and that Hurley therefore is the key
- 21 precedent here, and they say there is no serious
- 22 question, their words, no serious question that
- this case involves compelled speech.
- 24 Do you agree it involves compelled
- 25 speech?

1 MR. OLSON: No. 2 JUSTICE KAVANAUGH: Even though they 3 say there's no serious question that it does, you disagree with that? 4 MR. OLSON: We disagree with that. 5 6 JUSTICE KAVANAUGH: Okay. Thank you. 7 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Justice 8 Barrett? 9 JUSTICE BARRETT: How can you disagree with that in light of the stipulations that 10 11 Justice Gorsuch reviewed with you? Because, if 12 it's speech, you know, as the stipulations 13 Justice Gorsuch read did, and she has to say it, 14 why isn't it compelled speech? 15 MR. OLSON: Because, on the 16 stipulations and -- and where we are here, the 17 company would refuse to provide the same 18 identical speech to a customer solely because of 19 who they are. 20 And if the company is going to -- is going to provide speech, already said they're 21 22 going to do it at the website, I think was the 23 colloquy with Your Honor, Justice Barrett, where 24 someone comes in and says I want the exact same 25 website as you gave to my friends, and the

- 1 company says, no, I will not provide that to you
- 2 and the only reason is because of who -- who you
- 3 are, that's not compelled speech.
- 4 Certainly, there are some
- 5 circumstances where there may be more of this,
- 6 you know, tell the story, et cetera, but the
- 7 company can choose to determine the services
- 8 that it wants. Here, it has chosen to say that
- 9 I will not provide the exact same website for
- one couple than I would for another solely based
- on the identity of the couple.
- 12 JUSTICE BARRETT: Okay. I want to
- give you a hypothetical that doesn't rely on
- 14 disagreement, philosophical or otherwise, with
- speech but just a desire to promote a different
- 16 kind of speech.
- 17 So let's say a newspaper is running --
- 18 as many newspapers do, runs marriage
- 19 announcements. And so, you know, The New York
- 20 Times says that such announcements which it
- 21 picks have to satisfy its normal editorial
- 22 standards.
- Let's just say that the newspaper for
- 24 gay pride month decides that it's going to run
- 25 to promote and recognize same-sex marriage, only

- 1 same-sex marriage announcements, turns away
- 2 heterosexual announcements, not because it
- disparages or disagrees with opposite-sex unions
- 4 but because it's trying to promote something
- 5 else.
- 6 Can it do that? That's a protected
- 7 characteristic under the law?
- 8 MR. OLSON: Well, that's a hard
- 9 hypothetical because, normally, the marriage
- 10 announcements are considered to be a public
- 11 accommodation, but your intro -- hypothetical
- 12 introduces a layer of editorial discretion in --
- JUSTICE BARRETT: Well, you can't run
- 14 every marriage announcement that comes. There
- would be too many. So you're necessarily going
- 16 to pick and choose, just like every business is
- 17 going to have to pick and choose based on
- 18 resources.
- MR. OLSON: Well, and I think -- but,
- 20 in that circumstance, if the sole basis for
- 21 picking and choosing is a protected
- 22 characteristic, The New York Times couldn't say
- that we're -- we're going to have -- this month
- 24 we're just going to run opposite-sex weddings,
- 25 next month we're just going to run white people

1 weddings, next month we're just going to run --2 JUSTICE BARRETT: So, for gay pride 3 month, a newspaper can't choose to try to celebrate that and communicate a message by 4 running only gay marriage announcements? 5 6 MR. OLSON: Well, again, I think the 7 answer is no, but that's an unusual case because 8 a newspaper obviously typically has great discretion. 9 10 JUSTICE BARRETT: Well, it might be an 11 unusual case, but the problem and what a lot of 12 the hypotheticals are getting at is however we 13 decide this case obviously applies to others. 14 And what if we say it's not The New York Times, 15 but what if we say that it's a gay rights group 16 that wants to publish gay rights announcements 17 online all year round, not just for gay pride month, because it wants to celebrate love in 18 19 that community, and so it publishes only 20 same-sex marriage -- marriage announcements and 21 turns away opposite sex. 2.2 MR. OLSON: Well --23 JUSTICE BARRETT: Can the gay rights 24 organization do that? 25 MR. OLSON: Right. I think there

- 1 that's very unlikely to be a public
- 2 accommodation, so the answer is likely yes, but
- 3 --
- 4 JUSTICE BARRETT: Well, they're paid.
- 5 Why? I mean, they're paid. I mean, they --
- 6 they craft these for -- it's a business, it's a
- 7 commercial enterprise, but they craft these
- 8 announcements for the gay community.
- 9 MR. OLSON: I guess -- who crafts the
- 10 announcements? I thought it was --
- 11 JUSTICE BARRETT: So it's a -- it's a
- 12 -- it's a -- it's a gay rights enterprise. It's
- 13 a -- it's a group run by, you know, people who
- 14 are interested in promoting gay rights, and it's
- a forum to celebrate gay marriage. They charge.
- 16 You make money, and you run marriage
- announcements that have our story, et cetera,
- but it's done specifically to celebrate love in
- 19 that community. Can they turn away opposite-sex
- 20 marriage announcements?
- 21 MR. OLSON: So, in this unusual
- 22 hypothetical, assuming they're a public
- 23 accommodation, they cannot turn away
- announcements based on a protected
- 25 characteristic. So they couldn't turn -- turn

- 1 away opposite-sex announcements or interracial
- 2 marriages, I think, if they're a public
- 3 accommodation. But I think the --
- 4 JUSTICE BARRETT: So they can be
- 5 compelled to -- it's not -- it's not that they
- 6 have anything against opposite-sex unions, but
- 7 they can be compelled to give their, you know,
- 8 web space to those -- to those announcements
- 9 even though it's not consistent with the message
- 10 of their organization?
- MR. OLSON: Again, assuming they're a
- 12 public accommodation and opening themselves to
- 13 the public --
- JUSTICE BARRETT: Yes, assuming
- 15 they're --
- MR. OLSON: Yes, they -- they can be
- 17 --
- 18 JUSTICE BARRETT: -- a public
- 19 accommodation.
- 20 MR. OLSON: -- they can do that, but I
- 21 think what makes the hypothetical difficult is
- 22 that that assumption likely does -- does not
- 23 apply to most organizations like that that we
- 24 talked --
- 25 JUSTICE BARRETT: But it seems like

- 1 you can't get out of everything by defining
- 2 public accommodation narrowly or broadly
- 3 depending on it. I mean, you agree that in
- 4 Hurley the parade was a public accommodation as
- 5 we held? Because Hurley is your hardest case,
- 6 right?
- 7 MR. OLSON: It's a difficult case, but
- 8 it -- but we are different than Hurley, and I'm
- 9 happy to talk about why. But the public
- 10 accommodation law was applied to the parade in
- 11 Hurley, and the Court said that was -- because
- of the peculiar circumstances there, it was
- inappropriate.
- But, importantly, in Hurley, everyone
- 15 could march in the parade. The only issue was
- 16 who could carry the banner in the parade. And,
- in this case, people can't march in the parade.
- 18 The company is turning away people for their
- 19 products based solely on who they are, and
- that's the big difference from here and Hurley.
- JUSTICE BARRETT: Thank you.
- 22 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Justice
- 23 Jackson?
- JUSTICE JACKSON: Yes. So I just
- 25 wanted to say how perplexed I was about the

- 1 questions that seemed to distinguish this kind
- 2 of sexual orientation refusal to provide
- 3 services from the race discrimination. And
- 4 there were some questions raised about, you
- 5 know, religion being the basis, but I guess --
- 6 and -- and you might be able to help me with
- 7 this and you might not, but I -- I was fairly
- 8 certain that, historically, opposition to
- 9 interracial marriages and to integration in many
- 10 instances was on religious grounds. So I don't
- 11 know that we can say that just because we have a
- 12 religious objection to same-sex marriage in this
- 13 situation, that wouldn't necessarily implicate
- 14 religious objections to other kinds of
- 15 situations. Am I right about that?
- MR. OLSON: Absolutely correct about
- 17 that. I mean, Bob Jones University is a good
- 18 example of that case --
- 19 JUSTICE JACKSON: All right. So --
- 20 MR. OLSON: -- where there was a
- 21 religious basis --
- JUSTICE JACKSON: -- so whatever we
- 23 decide here, as Justice Barrett suggested, could
- 24 have implications for other kinds of
- 25 categorizations and First Amendment -- strongly

- 1 religious held First Amendment invocations of
- 2 rights?
- 3 MR. OLSON: Absolutely, and I think
- 4 the -- the reason my friend was having such
- 5 difficulty giving clear answers to some of these
- 6 hard questions was because there is no way to
- 7 cabin this to -- under the Free Speech Clause
- 8 exemption they seek, just to weddings or --
- 9 sexual orientation is involved.
- 10 JUSTICE JACKSON: All right. So can I
- 11 just direct your attention back to Justice
- 12 Kagan's question? Because I think she -- she
- made good points about, you know, the "God bless
- 14 this union" hypothetical. And I guess I was
- thinking, isn't part of the problem trying to
- 16 figure out whose statement of opinion it is when
- 17 you have a public accommodation?
- 18 When you have an artist for hire,
- 19 right, ordinarily, you would have an artist who,
- 20 even though they're making custom, you know,
- things, they're making custom things based on
- their own views and opinions and this is my art.
- But, when you have an artist for hire and people
- 24 come to them and say here's what I'd like you to
- 25 make, there's a question about whether what they

- 1 make is their statement or the customer's
- 2 statement.
- 3 So, if it was clear that it was not
- 4 their statement, let's say the gay couple comes
- 5 and they say we want "God bless this union" on
- 6 our website, and the web designer says that's
- fine, but you understand under our name at the
- 8 bottom we say on every website we believe that
- 9 marriage is only between one man and one woman
- and we're going to put that on your website?
- 11 Justice Alito says maybe that person will walk
- away, and maybe they will. But the point is, if
- they do that in every situation and it's clear
- that it's not their statement, then do we solve
- 15 the -- the -- the difficult Justice Kagan
- 16 problem of, like, who's -- who's making an
- 17 expression here?
- 18 MR. OLSON: I think we -- we make
- 19 progress towards solving it. And I think, back
- 20 to the stipulations, I think it's notable that
- 21 the stipulations here do not address that
- 22 question that you raise, Justice Jackson.
- What the company says is, well, every
- 24 website has "Designed by 303 Creative" at the
- 25 bottom. That's paragraph 83 of the

- 1 stipulations. And then they say: And if a
- 2 viewer of a wedding website goes to 303
- 3 Creative, then they will understand our
- 4 philosophy -- our own website, then they will
- 5 understand our philosophy and understand that
- 6 there's some implicit, you know, recognition or
- 7 endorsement, whatever, of the wedding.
- But, on the stipulated facts here, the
- 9 question you pose is totally wide open. There's
- 10 no evidence in the record whatsoever and no
- 11 websites in the record to look at to see whether
- 12 anyone would attribute the speech about the
- 13 couple on the wedding website to the designer as
- 14 opposed to the couple.
- 15 JUSTICE JACKSON: Should -- should we
- 16 have that as part of our standard in the
- 17 holding? Like let's say we don't want to go as
- 18 far as you're suggesting perhaps with the
- 19 holding in this case. Could -- could it be that
- 20 we would say, you know, the First Amendment
- 21 protects the web designer's abilities to, you
- 22 know, not have this kind of -- a same-sex
- 23 wedding website only if it would be clear from,
- 24 you know, a neutral observer or from the
- 25 audience that having that website is their own

1	expression?
2	MR. OLSON: So two things to say on
3	that, Your Honor. First is I think both Spence
4	and Hurley itself talked about the importance of
5	how an onlooker would look at the message and
6	and who the onlooker would attribute the message
7	to. So I think you certainly could could
8	could build on that. And, again, here, there's
9	no evidence whatsoever that that anyone would
10	look at a wedding website designed by 303
11	Creative and say, oh, that is, you know, the
12	speech and beliefs of the designer as opposed to
13	the couple getting married.
14	JUSTICE JACKSON: Thank you.
15	CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Thank you,
16	counsel.
17	MR. OLSON: Thank you.
18	CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Mr. Fletcher.
19	ORAL ARGUMENT OF BRIAN H. FLETCHER
20	FOR THE UNITED STATES, AS AMICUS CURIAE,
21	SUPPORTING THE RESPONDENTS
22	MR. FLETCHER: Thank you, Mr. Chief
23	Justice, and may it please the Court:
24	My friend, Ms. Waggoner, offered a
25	two-part test this morning for when a commercial

- 1 business is entitled to an exemption from a
- 2 generally applicable public accommodations law.
- 3 She said, number one, is their product speech,
- 4 and, number two, does serving a particular
- 5 customer change the message in the view of the
- 6 business.
- Now, as the questions today have
- 8 already explored, that leads to extremely
- 9 sweeping results. It means that any provider of
- 10 expressive services is entitled to put up a sign
- 11 saying we do not serve people with particular
- 12 characteristics whenever they believe that
- serving those people would change their message.
- 14 What I want to begin with today is to explain
- why that way of approaching the problem is also
- inconsistent with this Court's cases, most
- 17 notably Rumsfeld versus FAIR, which you
- 18 mentioned, Mr. Chief Justice. That case was not
- just about access to the law school's rooms.
- 20 The law schools had a separate claim that said
- 21 we provide other services to recruiters in the
- form of e-mails, newsletters, other things of
- 23 that nature, and this Court did not disagree.
- It said those things are clearly
- 25 speech. And the law schools also said, when we

- 1 are required to provide those services to the
- 2 military, it changes our message because it
- forces us to support a cause we deeply oppose.
- 4 And this Court did not disagree.
- 5 Instead, it said that compulsion of
- 6 speech is permissible because it's incidental to
- 7 a content-neutral regulation of conduct and that
- 8 law schools are required to speak only if and to
- 9 the extent they would provide the same speech
- 10 for others.
- I welcome the Court's questions.
- 12 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: I do think the
- Court in -- in Rumsfeld was dealing with a sort
- of compulsion that is significantly different
- 15 from the compulsion here. In what other case
- 16 have we upheld compelling speech, in other
- words, not simply just restricting speech but
- 18 actually compelling an individual to engage in
- 19 speech contrary to her beliefs?
- 20 MR. FLETCHER: So I think, Mr. Chief
- 21 Justice, Rumsfeld really is one of those cases.
- 22 And I want to emphasize that the law schools
- there really did have a very credible claim, I
- think, that they deeply opposed the military's
- 25 policies and that --

Τ	CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Well, they
2	opposed the military's policies, but all they
3	really had to do was give them an empty room.
4	MR. FLETCHER: Mr. Chief Justice,
5	that's not correct. At pages 60 to 62, the
6	Court acknowledges that there were things that
7	the law schools were required to do, like
8	sending e-mails, coordinating meetings,
9	including announcements in their newsletters
10	that were clearly speech. The court below had
11	held that that
12	CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Advising
13	advising people that the military recruiters
14	were available in a particular room, right?
15	MR. FLETCHER: And including their
16	announcements, distributing the announcements on
17	behalf of the military, including the military's
18	announcements in the law school's own
19	newsletter. The court below held and the law
20	school
21	CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Of the of
22	the fact that they would be recruiting on campus
23	pursuant to the Solomon amendment. Do you think
24	that's the same as the speech that's compelled
25	here, which is directly opposite to the beliefs

- 1 that the -- Ms. Smith is -- is seeking to
- 2 convey?
- 3 MR. FLETCHER: So I think it depends
- 4 very much about what type of speech we're
- 5 talking about here. I don't know that it is
- 6 different in a constitutional sense from the
- 7 sort of speech that was described in what
- 8 Justice Kagan, I think, called the basic
- 9 website, where we're talking about a website
- 10 that presents in an attractive way the details
- of the couple's wedding.
- 12 I think it might be a very different
- 13 case if she were compelled, if Colorado ever
- 14 applied its law to compel her to create messages
- or express religious views about marriage or to
- do some of the opinion-based statements that
- Justice Kagan described, but I think that case
- 18 might well come out differently.
- 19 JUSTICE KAGAN: In other words, you
- 20 would say that here is where the military
- 21 recruiters are going to be, with those
- 22 recruiters, of course, using the discriminatory
- 23 policy that the law schools deeply objected to.
- 24 Here is where the military recruiters are going
- 25 to be is very similar to here is where the

- 1 wedding is going to take place, which is what
- 2 standard websites do.
- 3 MR. FLETCHER: Exactly. And in saying
- 4 that, I don't want to at all minimize Ms.
- 5 Smith's sincere religious objection to saying
- 6 that for a wedding that she opposes. I'm just
- 7 making the point that the law schools also had
- 8 sincere moral objections to making those
- 9 statements to facilitate recruiting that they
- 10 found deeply objectionable.
- 11 JUSTICE BARRETT: What if the law
- 12 schools also had to make available their CDO to
- 13 sit down with the military and help them craft,
- 14 you know, in a statement that would be
- 15 attributable to the military, you know, this is
- 16 why a career with the military -- this is what
- it would be, this is why it's attractive, and
- 18 then post it? Would that change Rumsfeld?
- MR. FLETCHER: So there was actually
- 20 evidence that those sorts of services were
- 21 offered, that the law schools were pressing that
- are referenced in the Third Circuit's opinion
- 23 but not specifically referenced in this Court's
- 24 cases.
- I think what that starts to get into

- 1 is how do you draw the line between are you
- 2 providing -- is it really the same speech that
- 3 you would provide for someone else and are you
- 4 being required to do something that goes beyond
- 5 that to express the sort of opinion-related
- 6 statements that Justice Kagan espoused.
- 7 JUSTICE BARRETT: What if they do it
- 8 for everyone? The Career Development Office
- 9 will do that for, you know, law firms, this is
- 10 the job of an associate, and here is why it
- 11 would appealing, what you'd be getting out of
- 12 it. If they do that, then they would have had
- to do that for the military, or would that make
- 14 that case more like Hurley?
- MR. FLETCHER: So I guess here is the
- 16 way I'd answer the question, is the way that
- 17 Hurley did. We read Hurley to ask is the
- 18 compulsion, is the burden on speech, is it truly
- incidental to the content-neutral regulation of
- 20 conduct.
- 21 And what Hurley started with on pages
- 22 572 to 573 is being emphatic in saying this
- 23 parade is not excluding people because they are
- 24 gay and lesbian. It is excluding them solely
- 25 because of the message that they want to send.

- 1 And so the Court said applying the public
- 2 accommodations law to them is not incidental,
- 3 it's not serving the content-neutral regulation
- 4 of conduct because they're not discriminating on
- 5 the basis of status.
- 6 Instead, the law in Hurley, the Court
- 7 said, was equivalent to a law saying that the
- 8 parade had to include any message that any
- 9 protected group wanted to offer. That is not an
- 10 incidental burden on speech. That is a direct
- 11 burden on speech.
- 12 And the reason why we view this case
- 13 as being like FAIR and not like Hurley is
- 14 because Colorado is not asking Ms. Smith to say
- messages or to speak messages that she would not
- 16 speak for anybody. The only thing that it is
- 17 saying is you can't discriminate based on status
- and you can't define your services based on
- 19 protected status, so that you can't say the
- thing, the message that I object to that I won't
- 21 speak for anybody is a message that is tied to
- the customer's status.
- JUSTICE KAGAN: But what --
- 24 JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: Well, I -- I don't
- 25 know how many of my colleagues have looked at

- 1 the actual website. I don't even see
- 2 celebration of marriage in any of the examples.
- 3 Exhibit A, page 51, says Save The
- 4 Date, Lilly and Luke, November 20, you're
- 5 invited. And it says Lilly and Luke, and the
- 6 date and place, the town. The Exhibit 52 is
- 7 counting down the days. It doesn't even say
- 8 what it's counting down for, except our special
- 9 day, which everybody has to assume is the
- 10 couple's.
- 11 Fifty-three is an RSVP with pictures.
- 12 Fifty-four is our blog, bring your dancing
- 13 shoes. Fifty-five is their date, it all began
- seven years ago, Lilly's version and Luke's
- 15 version. It's clearly not 303's version. We
- 16 love each other and coffee -- I don't even know
- 17 what CO -- Colorado, Jesus, dogs, and diving.
- 18 We love each other is the couple who loves
- 19 Jesus, I assume your adversary won't say Jesus
- doesn't love them back, but it doesn't say that.
- 21 The 57 is the ceremony. Fifty-eight
- is the reception, location, spirits, dinner menu
- 23 and dancing. Fifty-nine is location. I don't
- 24 see anywhere I'm celebrating the marriage or God
- loves anyone or anything to do with anything

1 like that. So have you reviewed this website? 2 MR. FLETCHER: I have, Justice 3 Sotomayor. JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: Do you believe 4 5 that there's any page that says celebrate the 6 marriage? 7 MR. FLETCHER: I -- honestly, to -- as I stand here today, I can't remember whether 8 there is or not. I don't think it would make a 9 10 difference if there were. And I think what the 11 examples that you just read highlight is that 12 there is a lot of websites or content on websites that is properly within this case 13 14 because it is consistent with the stipulations 15 Justice Gorsuch and with the scope of relief 16 that they're asking for and with the type of 17 services that Ms. Waggoner has described this 18 morning. 19 JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: What they're 20 asking for is a status-based exemption to 21 accommodate. 2.2 MR. FLETCHER: That's exactly right. JUSTICE GORSUCH: Well, on that --23 24 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: I thought --25 JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: Not a speech-based

- 1 exemption.
- 2 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Just I thought
- 3 at pages 188A and 189A, the stipulation below
- 4 said that the additions to the web page stated,
- 5 and then it lists the firm belief in God that
- 6 they, Ms. Smith, subscribed to. Is that -- do
- 7 you understand that to be part of the
- 8 stipulations or not?
- 9 MR. FLETCHER: I do, Mr. Chief
- 10 Justice, but that's referring to her website,
- 11 her business's own website, not the websites
- 12 that she would create for clients and not the
- 13 websites that would be subject to the public
- 14 accommodations law.
- 15 JUSTICE GORSUCH: We also --
- 16 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: And -- I'm
- 17 sorry, go ahead.
- JUSTICE GORSUCH: No, no. Please,
- 19 Chief.
- 20 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: I was just
- 21 going to say also on page 188A is the determined
- 22 -- the stipulation that her religious beliefs
- 23 will be unmistakable to the public after viewing
- 24 the addition to the web page.
- MR. FLETCHER: Yes. Once again,

- 1 that's describing her website, not the websites
- 2 that she would create for clients or the
- 3 Colorado law might her -- might require her to
- 4 provide on a nondiscriminatory basis.
- 5 JUSTICE GORSUCH: And, counsel, we
- 6 also have stipulations from Colorado that the
- 7 plaintiff is willing to work with all people,
- 8 regardless of classification, such as race,
- 9 creed, sexual orientation, and gender, right?
- MR. FLETCHER: In some respects, yes,
- 11 but not --
- JUSTICE GORSUCH: No, that is the stip
- 13 -- I -- I just read it. Do you disagree
- 14 with that? It's a stipulated fact in this case.
- MR. FLETCHER: That is stipulated, but
- it's also clear that she will not provide any
- 17 wedding website for a same-sex couple.
- JUSTICE GORSUCH: Well, for a same-sex
- 19 wedding --
- 20 MR. FLETCHER: For a same-sex wedding,
- 21 yes.
- JUSTICE GORSUCH: -- and she won't
- 23 provide it to a heterosexual couple either,
- 24 right?
- MR. FLETCHER: But that's still

1	discrimination within the meaning of
2	JUSTICE GORSUCH: Just as she wouldn't
3	sell a website that celebrates a heterosexual
4	union that she disagreed with to anyone
5	regardless of their sexual orientation, right?
6	MR. FLETCHER: That may be right,
7	Justice Gorsuch, but I think Masterpiece
8	couldn't have been clearer in saying that
9	declining to sell goods or services, even
10	expressive goods and services, for a same-sex
11	wedding is a form of status-based discrimination
12	properly within the scope of public
13	accommodations laws.
14	JUSTICE GORSUCH: And on on that, I
15	just want to make sure I understand. Do we
16	agree as well that this is this work that the
17	plaintiff performs is expressive in nature?
18	MR. FLETCHER: We do.
19	JUSTICE GORSUCH: Okay. Thank you.
20	JUSTICE JACKSON: And if it's
21	expressive, what what about my photograph
22	hypothetical?
23	MR. FLETCHER: So I didn't belabor
24	this at the beginning, Justice Jackson, but your
25	photograph hypothetical is exactly the sort of

- 1 implication of the arguments that Petitioners
- 2 are advancing that are of concern to the United
- 3 States.
- 4 We really do think it's very difficult
- 5 if you accept her principle, is it speech and
- 6 does the speaker believe the message has
- 7 changed, to say that someone who is doing that
- 8 would not be entitled under her theory to an
- 9 exemption from the public accommodations laws.
- 10 And we think that's a very sweeping
- 11 accommodation that's inconsistent with the
- 12 Court's admonition in Masterpiece Cakeshop that
- any sorts of carveouts in these areas have to be
- 14 carefully cabined to avoid undermining the
- 15 government's compelling interest in ensuring
- 16 that all Americans have equal access to the
- 17 public marketplace.
- JUSTICE JACKSON: And so just to be
- 19 clear, right, it -- it's the same photograph for
- 20 both customers, that this expression in my
- 21 example is classic scenes with Santa, "It's a
- 22 Wonderful Life, " 1940s, and we want -- the --
- 23 the artist, the photographer, wants Santa with
- 24 the kinds of depictions that are in that movie,
- and he wants to sell that to everybody, but what

- 1 that means is only some people can be depicted
- 2 in that picture.
- 4 to make it -- because we've heard a lot of
- 5 questions about, well, isn't she customizing it?
- 6 I mean, he's customizing each photo, but what
- 7 he's saying is, I won't do the customization for
- 8 these folks who want depictions with Santa
- 9 because that is inconsistent with my beliefs
- 10 about how that scene should be depicted, and I'm
- an artist, and you'd be forcing me to put out
- into the world pictures of Santa with children
- 13 that I think are inconsistent with my view of
- 14 how Santa should be depicted.
- MR. FLETCHER: We agree, Justice
- 16 Jackson. We think, if you accept Petitioners'
- theory, the upshot is that that photographer or
- 18 a photographer who says, I won't take corporate
- 19 head shots for women because I don't want to
- send the message that women should be leaders in
- 21 the workplace, can deny service to a class of
- 22 people.
- JUSTICE BARRETT: Mr. Fletcher, what
- if you have a gay couple who runs a web design
- 25 business in a college town, and, you know, a big

- 1 part of their business is developing websites
- 2 for student organizations, the environmental
- 3 organization, like, different rec club leagues,
- 4 whatever. And then you have a Christian
- 5 organization or Catholic organization that
- 6 basically stands for and advocates traditional
- 7 views of marriage. This is the raison d'etre
- 8 for the club. They host debates, invite
- 9 speakers, and they want the standard website
- 10 that this couple provides in their business,
- 11 which is, you know, graphics that make it look
- 12 appealing, kind of an About Us page that
- describes what they do and what their beliefs
- are. And let's say that this couple, like 303
- 15 Creative, has on the bottom of every page like,
- 16 you know, "Designed" -- "Designed by," you know,
- 17 "Jack and Michael." Everything this club wants
- 18 to say is an anathema to this couple.
- 19 Do they have to -- can you compel that
- 20 speech? Do they have to publish it?
- MR. FLETCHER: I don't think they do,
- 22 Justice --
- JUSTICE BARRETT: Why?
- 24 MR. FLETCHER: Because I don't think
- 25 that's a refusal based on status.

1	JUSTICE BARRETT: Okay. This is my
2	question, that's why I asked it, because I
3	think, here, there's a difference of opinion
4	about whether turning down the same-sex couple
5	simply for purposes of a marriage announcement
6	is a turn-down based on status or message. And
7	it seems to me in my hypothetical that the
8	status of the club is inextricably intertwined
9	with the message they want to speak.
LO	So why is it different?
L1	MR. FLETCHER: For a couple of
L2	reasons. I think, first of all, just to start
L3	with same the same-sex marriage context, this
L4	Court has recognized that that's a circumstance
L5	where status and conduct are inextricably
L6	intertwined. In Lawrence and Masterpiece, the
L7	Court has said refusing to serve for same-sex
L8	marriages is discrimination against same gays
L9	and lesbians because status and conduct is
20	inextricably intertwined.
21	The public accommodations laws and the
22	anti-discrimination laws generally don't work
23	that way in general. We don't think that the
24	expression of particular views is inextricably
2.5	intertwined with having a particular religion or

- 1 being a Democrat or a Republican.
- In general, in public accommodations
- 3 laws, we say, when you discriminate against
- 4 someone because they want you to print a website
- 5 or serve an event or cater an event for
- 6 something that you disagree with, we wouldn't
- 7 say that that's a status-based refusal. And I
- 8 think that's correct. I -- I don't think --
- 9 JUSTICE BARRETT: So this is a
- 10 carve-out that's applicable just to the same-sex
- 11 context?
- 12 MR. FLETCHER: I think it's a context
- 13 -- it's like the Court's recognition in Bray
- 14 that a tax on yarmulkes is a tax on Jews. There
- 15 are certain rare contexts where status and
- 16 conduct are inextricably intertwined, and I
- 17 think the Court has rightly recognized that
- 18 same-sex marriage is one of them.
- 19 JUSTICE BARRETT: Thank you.
- 20 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Justice
- 21 Thomas?
- 22 Justice Alito?
- JUSTICE ALITO: I want to make sure I
- 24 understand some of the contours of your
- 25 argument. So my first question is whether you

- 1 believe that speech can be compelled so long as
- 2 the person who is compelled to speech -- to
- 3 speak is -- is not associated with the compelled
- 4 speech.
- 5 MR. FLETCHER: That's not the line
- 6 that we draw, Justice Alito. I think we focused
- 7 on is it being compelled pursuant -- incidental
- 8 to a content-neutral regulation of conduct as in
- 9 FAIR, or is it not.
- 10 JUSTICE ALITO: Well, outside of that
- 11 context, in general, does the prohibition or
- 12 restriction of compelled speech apply only where
- 13 there is no danger of attribution?
- MR. FLETCHER: I don't think so, no.
- 15 I would imagine it applying in other contexts
- 16 too.
- 17 JUSTICE ALITO: Okay. Do you agree
- 18 with Mr. Olson that a -- a website for marriages
- 19 can tailor the website in a way that makes the
- website unacceptable to same-sex couples?
- MR. FLETCHER: By saying, for
- instance, we -- on every website, we believe
- that marriage is only between one man and one
- woman or something like that, yes, we do.
- JUSTICE ALITO: You believe that's --

- 1 that's permissible?
- 2 MR. FLETCHER: We understand that to
- 3 be permissible as a matter of Colorado law, and,
- 4 also, we think that's consistent with the way
- 5 the public accommodations laws usually work.
- JUSTICE ALITO: Mr. Olson's answer to
- 7 that was if a website -- or part of the answer
- 8 at least was that if a website included
- 9 something like that, that would cause the
- 10 website to lose a significant amount of business
- 11 because some opposite-sex couples wouldn't want
- 12 that. But that's dependent on the views of the
- 13 community about opposite sex -- about same
- 14 sex -- I'm sorry, about same-sex marriages.
- What if it's in a community where 99
- 16 percent of the public agree with that view, that
- same-sex marriages are -- are bad, and they're
- happy to have that associated with it?
- 19 MR. FLETCHER: So I don't think my
- 20 answer changes, Justice Alito, because I think
- 21 that imposing a requirement or prohibiting that
- 22 inclusion on a website is directly targeting the
- 23 expressive content of the website.
- 24 JUSTICE ALITO: Isn't that kind of a
- 25 silly distinction?

1 MR. FLETCHER: Justice Alito, 2 respectfully, no, I -- I don't think it is. 3 think it's one that's familiar both to public accommodations laws and to the First Amendment. 4 So, in the public accommodations context, as Mr. 5 6 Olson said, you could have a store that can say 7 we sell products that are solely for -- related to Judaism, and it's not likely to be appealing 8 to Christians or Hindus, but no one thinks the 9 10 store is violating the public accommodations 11 laws unless it says no Christians or Hindus may 12 enter, and then it is violating the public accommodations laws. 13 14 JUSTICE ALITO: Is there any limit to how broadly a state can define a public 15 16 accommodation? So suppose the state defines it 17 as any business -- a business that provides services to a significant portion of the public. 18 19 MR. FLETCHER: I --20 JUSTICE ALITO: Would that make -mean it's no -- it can't be regarded as public 21 2.2 accommodations anymore? 23 MR. FLETCHER: I don't know about that line specifically, Justice Alito. I -- I will 24 accept the premise of the question. I do think 25

- 1 there are limits as to how far the state can go
- 2 at least when we're talking about what's a
- 3 sufficiently substantial interest to justify or
- 4 to pass scrutiny under the O'Brien test.
- 5 JUSTICE ALITO: Well, I ask this
- 6 because a lot of the arguments on your side
- 7 seemed to view public accommodations -- that if
- 8 it's a public accommodations law, it's generally
- 9 okay, there's no problem with it. And that's
- 10 why I want to know how far that can be expanded.
- 11 So some selectivity would not
- 12 necessarily take a business outside of the --
- 13 the definition of public accommodations? The
- same arguments would apply?
- MR. FLETCHER: Some selectivity
- 16 wouldn't take them out, but I think the farther
- 17 the state wanders from the sort of traditional
- 18 core of commercial establishments that hold
- 19 themselves out as serving the public, the weaker
- 20 the state interest is.
- 21 JUSTICE ALITO: What about the
- 22 characteristics that form the basis for an
- impermissible denial of service? Any limit to
- 24 those?
- 25 MR. FLETCHER: I think there, the same

- 1 answer. So not in the sense that a state can
- 2 define its public accommodations laws however it
- 3 wants. But, yes, when it starts to bump up
- 4 against the First Amendment and you're
- 5 applying the O'Brien standard, protection for
- 6 some characteristics, you know, things that go
- 7 beyond the traditional things, like race, sex,
- 8 sexual orientation, religion, those at issue
- 9 here, and get out into political affiliation or,
- 10 you know --
- 11 JUSTICE ALITO: It can't define it as
- 12 political affiliation?
- 13 MR. FLETCHER: I --
- JUSTICE ALITO: It can't define it to
- 15 include political affiliations --
- 16 MR. FLETCHER: I'm not saying it can't
- 17 --
- 18 JUSTICE ALITO: -- or ideology?
- MR. FLETCHER: I'm not saying it can't
- 20 define it that way. I'm just saying that the
- 21 interest supported by such a prohibition would
- 22 be weaker than the really core ones like those
- 23 that we see at issue here.
- 24 JUSTICE ALITO: Along -- okay. So how
- 25 much selectivity do you think is required?

1 MR. FLETCHER: So that's going to be, 2 I think, in the first instance, as a state law 3 matter or as a constitutional sort of backstop matter, I think it's hard to give a precise 4 answer. I think the Court's opinion in Fulton 5 6 gives some guidance and says more selectivity, 7 more individualized review is less likely to be a public accommodation, and in contrast, an 8 9 entity that generally holds itself out as open 10 to the public can't escape the public 11 accommodations laws just by imposing a 12 discriminatory limitation or some pretense of selectivity. And I -- I know I can't give you a 13 14 bright line, but I think this is a familiar 15 problem in public accommodations law. 16 JUSTICE ALITO: Okay. Suppose -- last 17 -- I -- I think my last question. Suppose 303 Creative says that there's so much demand for 18 19 our services that we have to be selective in who we choose. Would this be -- would that make 20 21 this case -- would this case come out 2.2 differently then? 23 MR. FLETCHER: I don't think so, Justice Alito. I think that a business that is 24 25 open to the public and serves the public but has

- 1 more business than it can handle and so has to
- 2 be selective is still a public accommodation.
- JUSTICE ALITO: Thank you.
- 4 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Justice
- 5 Sotomayor?
- 6 Justice Kagan?
- 7 JUSTICE KAGAN: Mr. Fletcher, when I
- 8 read your brief, I had the sense that you and
- 9 General Olson, Colorado, parted ways on -- on --
- on some matters, and I'll just -- on my
- 11 hypothetical, God Blesses This Union, I thought
- 12 that you might find -- find that more difficult
- than General Olson, and I'm wondering if I'm
- 14 right about that and -- and if I am right why
- and what that says about your argument
- 16 generally.
- 17 MR. FLETCHER: So let me give you the
- answer I give today. I'd start with just the
- 19 same observation that General Olson gave you,
- 20 which is that I think there are free exercise
- 21 clause issues might come into play. I'll put
- those to the side because this is a speech case,
- 23 right?
- 24 And I think what that pushes on is can
- 25 the person who's providing services credibly say

- 1 I'm not denying service just because of status,
- 2 I'm denying service because there's some message
- 3 that's not just tied to status that I'm not
- 4 willing to speak for anybody.
- 5 And, to me, some --
- 6 JUSTICE KAGAN: Gay marriages are
- 7 wonderful to take the religion out of it.
- 8 MR. FLETCHER: Right. Right. So,
- 9 obviously, Ms. Smith can say, I will not make
- 10 any wedding website for anyone that says gay
- 11 marriages are wonderful. She can refuse on that
- 12 ground. Colorado agrees. We agree. Right?
- JUSTICE KAGAN: Right. I get the "God
- 14 Blesses This Union" was -- was supposed to be so
- that it would be, she would be, like, perfectly
- 16 fine with saying it for some couples and not
- 17 fine with saying it for other couples.
- 18 MR. FLETCHER: Correct, yes. And I
- 19 guess I -- it's -- it's a harder case. You
- 20 know, I think it's one of the reasons why this
- 21 case is frustrating is because we don't have any
- 22 concrete facts.
- I think my inclination on that case is
- that I think she has a strong argument to say,
- 25 really, that is making me send a different

- 1 message because of the context. It's not a
- 2 literal test. It's not just are the words
- 3 exactly the same, right?
- 4 We acknowledge that context matters.
- 5 And so, in a case like that, I think she has a
- 6 much stronger claim to say, if Colorado law
- 7 applied its law to make me say that, and I think
- 8 it's far from clear that Colorado would, then it
- 9 wouldn't be imposing the sort of incidental
- 10 burden the Court saw in FAIR. Then it's
- imposing the sort of direct burden you saw in
- 12 Hurley, and the analysis looks very different.
- JUSTICE KAGAN: Yeah. So what you
- said is part of what frustrates me about this
- 15 case, because, you know, I guess my view when
- 16 I'm trying to think of hypotheticals for myself
- is a little bit it depends.
- On the first set of hypotheticals I
- 19 gave, I would come out one way, and on the
- 20 second set of hypotheticals I gave -- I hope I'm
- 21 not giving too much away -- I think it's much
- 22 tougher and I might come out the other way.
- 23 And -- and it really depends on the
- facts and on what exactly Ms. Smith is being
- asked or compelled to do and that matters. And

- 1 we have a case without any of that in it. And
- 2 what should I do with that?
- 3 MR. FLETCHER: So I think you should
- 4 take the case as it comes to you. And as it
- 5 comes to you, it's Ms. Smith saying, I want to
- 6 post a sign saying I will not provide any
- 7 websites for any same-sex marriages. That's
- 8 Pet. App. 7A.
- 9 JUSTICE KAGAN: Categorical rule.
- 10 MR. FLETCHER: Categorical rule based
- on status. And at page 303 to 304 in the -- of
- the Joint Appendix, which General Olson referred
- to, that's the relief that she's seeking, how
- she's framed her claim. What she wants is an
- injunction that says you can't make --
- 16 JUSTICE KAGAN: Justice Gorsuch says
- we don't want to do things based on relief
- 18 because courts are in control of relief, so take
- 19 out that part of your -- I mean, whether he
- 20 might be right, he might not be right, but would
- 21 it matter if we took that out?
- MR. FLETCHER: I don't -- I don't
- think it would because what I heard Ms. Waggoner
- to say this morning when she was asked about
- 25 what her client wants to do is that the services

- 1 she provide are not limited to the ones that are
- 2 described in the stipulations. She would
- 3 provide something that wasn't so customized as
- 4 long as it was to an opposite-sex couple, but
- 5 she wouldn't provide it to a same-sex couple.
- 6 That is what she is asking the courts to
- 7 validate.
- 8 And I think the Court can take that
- 9 claim as she presents it and say on that level
- 10 of generality she is not entitled to
- 11 pre-enforcement relief.
- 12 But I think it can also do to --
- 13 because I recognize there are harder questions
- 14 out there. It could and should do what it did
- in Holder versus Humanitarian Law Project and
- 16 Doe versus Reed and say, in rejecting this
- 17 facial challenge in part -- or, I'm sorry,
- 18 pre-enforcement challenge in part because we
- 19 need more facts and we don't have them, we are
- 20 not foreclosing the possibility that there is
- 21 narrow relief in future cases with concrete
- 22 facts.
- JUSTICE KAGAN: Last question. You
- 24 said to Justice Jackson that you didn't want to
- 25 belabor the point, but her hypothetical is

- 1 exactly the kind of hypothetical that you're
- 2 concerned about.
- 3 You must have done many moots of this
- 4 case and thought of many hypotheticals. What
- 5 are your two ones that you're like killers?
- 6 (Laughter).
- 7 JUSTICE KAGAN: If we rule for Ms.
- 8 Waggoner and her client, what happens? Give me
- 9 two hypotheticals.
- 10 MR. FLETCHER: That's a lot of
- 11 pressure on my mooters. My favorite one is this
- 12 Court's decision in Runyon versus McCrary, which
- 13 was about a school that wanted to exclude
- 14 children of particular races, and it said the
- reason we want to do this is because segregation
- is important to our beliefs and that's what we
- 17 want to teach. And this Court said, you are
- 18 free to teach segregation in your school, but
- 19 you can't act on that belief by excluding
- 20 children of particular races.
- 21 And I think -- this is a private
- 22 school obviously. And I think, if Petitioners
- are right, that case comes out differently as
- long as the school can come in and say, when we
- teach, we are expressing messages and those

- 1 messages change when we express them to students
- 2 of different races.
- I think that's very troubling. And I
- 4 guess I take Justice Alito's point that I do not
- 5 mean to equate those who have different views
- 6 about marriage to racists, but the reason why I
- 7 rely on those hypotheticals is because this
- 8 Court's First Amendment jurisprudence does not
- 9 distinguish between views we find odious and
- 10 those we respect. The same principles apply in
- 11 both cases, and if the principles lead to
- 12 unacceptable places when we consider them in
- 13 light of odious views, then I think we have to
- 14 reject those principles even in a case where we
- 15 sympathize with and respect the views.
- JUSTICE KAGAN: Thank you.
- 17 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Justice
- 18 Gorsuch.
- 19 JUSTICE GORSUCH: I think, at the end
- of two hours -- we are now in the afternoon, by
- 21 the way.
- MR. FLETCHER: Good afternoon.
- JUSTICE GORSUCH: That there --
- there's actually radical agreement on -- on how
- 25 we should analyze this case legally. Tell me if

- 1 I'm wrong.
- 2 MR. FLETCHER: I disagree, but go
- 3 ahead.
- 4 JUSTICE GORSUCH: You haven't even
- 5 given me a chance.
- 6 (Laughter.)
- 7 JUSTICE GORSUCH: That -- that -- that
- 8 what -- what would be impermissible is
- 9 discrimination on the basis of status, but what
- 10 would be permissible is -- is refusing service
- 11 because of a disagreement about views.
- MR. FLETCHER: So I guess I -- what
- 13 I -- the reason I disagreed at first is to say I
- think there is general agreement that that's
- 15 about the right outcome.
- 16 JUSTICE GORSUCH: That that's about
- 17 the right way to think about this case.
- 18 MR. FLETCHER: But great difference of
- 19 opinion about how legally you get there and that
- leads to difference of opinion about how you
- 21 answer it.
- JUSTICE GORSUCH: But -- but -- but --
- 23 but -- but I -- I was about -- you just steal my
- thunder, counsel.
- 25 (Laughter.)

- 1 JUSTICE GORSUCH: You think this is a 2 status case. The other side thinks it's a -- a 3 viewpoint case. Is that fair too? 4 MR. FLETCHER: I -- I wouldn't say that. I acknowledge that this is a status and a 5 6 message case. 7 JUSTICE GORSUCH. Okay. It's both --MR. FLETCHER: Yes. 8
- 9 JUSTICE GORSUCH: -- in your view, I'm
- sorry, whereas they would say it's a message
- 11 case.
- MR. FLETCHER: Correct.
- JUSTICE GORSUCH: But to think about
- it, the status versus message, is -- I just want
- to make sure we all agree that that's the right
- 16 way to think about this case.
- 17 MR. FLETCHER: Correct. And can I
- 18 explain why we think --
- 19 JUSTICE GORSUCH: Sure. Sure.
- 20 MR. FLETCHER: -- that's the right to
- 21 think about the case? Because we think the
- first question is, is the burden that's being
- 23 imposed on Ms. Smith incidental to a
- 24 content-neutral regulation of conduct that says
- you can't turn people away because of status.

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1 JUSTICE GORSUCH: Right.
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- 2 MR. FLETCHER: So, to us, the first
- 3 question is, is what she's doing status-based
- 4 discrimination?
- 5 JUSTICE GORSUCH: Right.
- 6 MR. FLETCHER: And if the answer is
- 7 yes, then the burden is incidental even if she
- 8 thinks it affects her --
- 9 JUSTICE GORSUCH: No, I -- I -- I
- 10 -- I got that about an hour ago, but thank you.
- 11 MR. FLETCHER: I -- I -- I
- 12 apologize.
- JUSTICE GORSUCH: Now the -- the --
- the other question I had is, in your view, this
- is status-based, but Justice Barrett's
- 16 hypothetical of the inverse situation is
- message-based.
- 18 MR. FLETCHER: I wouldn't describe it
- 19 as the inverse situation because I didn't
- 20 understand the hypothetical to say that the
- 21 campus print -- website design company was
- turning people away because of their status. I
- 23 understood it to be turning them away because
- 24 they wanted to say things that the company would
- 25 not say.

Τ	JUSTICE GORSUCH: That's one way of
2	describing it, or one might describe it as
3	turning away those with traditionalist views of
4	marriage based on their religious beliefs,
5	conservative Christians, for example.
6	MR. FLETCHER: So I guess I just
7	disagree with that, Justice Gorsuch. I think
8	the way we answer any status-based
9	discrimination question is we change the
10	protected status, we hold everything else
11	constant, and we ask does the outcome change.
12	And in Ms. Smith's case, you change
13	the protected status, it's, you know, Jack and
14	Taylor, and you ask will she make the website
15	JUSTICE GORSUCH: Except for that runs
16	into all of those stipulated facts in which the
17	plaintiff has said repeatedly that she will
18	serve everyone and she would deny everyone this
19	kind of website.
20	MR. FLETCHER: But denying everyone,
21	whether it it it's
22	JUSTICE GORSUCH: Everyone, regardless
23	of status.
24	MR. FLETCHER: Right, but it's
25	JUSTICE GORSUCH: Right?

1 MR. FLETCHER: -- race discrimination 2 to say I won't serve interracial -- I won't create inter -- websites for interracial 3 marriage and I won't sell them even to a white 4 wedding planner. That's still race 5 discrimination. 6 7 JUSTICE GORSUCH: It can be -- it can be status or it can be message and we have to 8 9 figure that out in this case, right? 10 MR. FLETCHER: What I -- but the way 11 you would figure it out is, does -- has Colorado 12 validly defined it as status-based discrimination. And I think the answer that the 13 14 Court gave at pages 1727 to 1729 in Masterpiece 15 is yes. 16 JUSTICE GORSUCH: Okay, got it. Thank 17 you. 18 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Justice 19 Kavanaugh? 20 JUSTICE KAVANAUGH: I just want to 21 follow up there and ask about one thing in your 2.2 brief. On page 32 of your brief, you deal with

a few hypotheticals. The hypotheticals you

dealt with were requiring Muslim filmmakers to

promote Scientology, compelling lesbian artists

23

24

- 1 to design church websites criticizing same-sex
- 2 marriage, or -- and the third one I really want
- 3 to focus on -- or forcing writers to write
- 4 speeches that violate their most deeply held
- 5 convictions.
- 6 So those are the three hypotheticals
- 7 you posit responding to the other side. And
- 8 then you say those hypotheticals, unlike this
- 9 case, involve direct burdens on speech because
- 10 they contemplate speakers being forced to create
- and convey ideological messages they would not
- 12 create for anyone.
- 13 And I think the other side would say
- that's exactly this case too to take that third
- 15 category. These are writers, in essence, being
- 16 asked to write speeches that violate their most
- 17 deeply held convictions.
- 18 So I'm trying to figure out given what
- 19 you say there how you would say this case does
- 20 not involve the same thing as a writer being
- 21 forced to write speeches that violate their most
- 22 deeply held convictions.
- MR. FLETCHER: Because, in each of
- those hypotheticals, you can't posit a
- 25 content-neutral law like a public accommodations

- 1 law that would validly require the writer or the
- 2 speaker or the filmmaker to do what the
- 3 hypothetical has posited.
- It's because, in those cases, as we
- 5 say, it's a direct burden on speech. The
- 6 regulation is compelling you to write something
- 7 you deeply disagree with because of the message.
- 8 It's not incidental to a content-neutral
- 9 regulation of conduct like the Court confronted
- in FAIR and like we believe it's confronted with
- 11 here.
- 12 JUSTICE KAVANAUGH: You don't think
- applying a public accommodations law to a speech
- 14 writing business that offers to do speeches or
- PR releases for anyone, but they say, oh, we're
- 16 not going to do this message --
- 17 MR. FLETCHER: That's --
- JUSTICE KAVANAUGH: -- you don't think
- 19 that's this --
- 20 MR. FLETCHER: I -- I --
- 21 JUSTICE KAVANAUGH: They would say
- that's this case, and you say it's not because?
- MR. FLETCHER: I think they'd be
- 24 wrong. I -- so, first of all, at a couple of
- 25 levels.

1 JUSTICE KAVANAUGH: 2 MR. FLETCHER: Speech writers aren't 3 likely to be public accommodations. Set that 4 aside. JUSTICE KAVANAUGH: Yeah, but --5 6 MR. FLETCHER: Suppose you have one 7 that was one, right? 8 JUSTICE KAVANAUGH: Until they are, 9 after this case if you prevail, I mean, that's -- that's -- that's what states could do. 10 MR. FLETCHER: But -- but I've tried 11 12 to give you -- in response to Justice Alito, there is I think a constitutional backstop 13 14 about, you know, core public accommodations laws 15 we think satisfy O'Brien scrutiny. If a state 16 wanders from that, not so -- not so much. 17 But, again, just to get to the nub of your hypothetical, we think if the speech writer 18 19 says here's a speech that expresses views that I 20 abhor and I won't write the speech, they 21 wouldn't do that for anybody, regardless of 2.2 status. Now, it may be that the status of the 23 person who's asking them to write the speech is 24 somehow correlated with the message in some way, 25 but that's still not status-based discrimination

- 1 in the way that the law regards discrimination
- 2 against people who are entering into a same-sex
- 3 marriage as status-based discrimination.
- JUSTICE KAVANAUGH: Okay. Thank you.
- 5 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Justice
- 6 Barrett?
- 7 Justice Jackson?
- 8 JUSTICE JACKSON: Can I just say that
- 9 I'm sort of trying to think about what you've
- 10 just said in your exchange with Justice
- 11 Kavanaugh -- it's late -- by wondering whether
- or not it has something to do with the message
- 13 being implicitly provided in a situation in
- 14 which the -- what's actually being stated is the
- 15 same.
- So, you know, it -- what would you
- 17 think of a holding that says that the First
- 18 Amendment protects this designer's right to
- 19 provide products that explicitly express her
- 20 beliefs about marriage, so she absolutely has
- 21 the right to say one man, one woman, in every
- 22 website, and she has the right to refuse to say
- 23 gay marriage is great, in any website, but what
- 24 she's really asking for in this case, I think,
- is the right to say the same thing, here's the

- 1 wedding, it's at this place, et cetera, et
- 2 cetera, but she's afraid that if she says it for
- 3 gay people, that that will be sort of like an
- 4 implicit endorsement of their wedding, and so
- 5 she wants to be able to protect against
- 6 implicitly endorsing, right, in a way that we've
- 7 never really recognized before in the same way,
- 8 when it isn't really clear that that's her
- 9 message, when we don't -- when an objective
- 10 observer would know that she was really trying
- 11 to do that? Am I right in trying to think about
- 12 explicit versus implicit in this way?
- 13 MR. FLETCHER: I think that basically
- 14 maps onto the test that we're trying to give
- you, which is to say, if she's discriminating
- 16 based on status, and that includes if she's
- 17 defining the message or the product based on the
- 18 status, defining the what by the who, that's not
- 19 okay. But other than that, she has the freedom
- 20 to define her own product. And I think I'd
- 21 agree with you entirely that the Court has never
- 22 recognized that sort of implicit problem as
- 23 being sufficient. And, in fact, I would say in
- 24 FAIR, the Court squarely rejected it, where the
- law schools had a claim that was very, very

- 1 similar in structure, to say we don't want to
- 2 implicitly support these policies we deeply,
- 3 deeply oppose. No one doubted there was
- 4 implicit support, and no one doubt it was
- 5 speech, but because it was incidental, the Court
- 6 upheld it.
- 7 JUSTICE JACKSON: Thank you.
- 8 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Thank you,
- 9 counsel.
- 10 Rebuttal, Ms. Waggoner?
- 11 REBUTTAL ARGUMENT OF KRISTEN K. WAGGONER
- 12 ON BEHALF OF THE PETITIONERS
- MS. WAGGONER: Mr. Chief Justice, the
- 14 United States says that you can refuse to
- 15 express messages unless those messages are about
- 16 marriage and unless those views on marriage have
- to do with believing that marriage is between a
- 18 man and a woman. That's a significant
- 19 concession that the government has made.
- 20 In terms of this issue of categorical
- 21 denial, the only categorical denial that Ms.
- 22 Smith seeks or a categorical request she seeks
- is to have message-based protection that the
- 24 First Amendment already provides. It's based on
- 25 the message. And in that way, this Court

- decides every speech case based on the message.
- 2 We can look at FAIR. We can look at Miami
- 3 Herald, Tornillo. All of the Court's cases on
- 4 speech where compelled speech is applied, you
- 5 will see the "affect or alter the message" test
- 6 including in Hurley. And in order to rule
- 7 against Ms. Smith in this particular case it
- 8 does seem that the Court would essentially have
- 9 to overrule that Hurley framework.
- 10 Second, Chief Justice Roberts raised
- 11 the issue of FAIR and how FAIR applies, and the
- 12 United States has suggested that somehow this
- 13 case is closer to that. But in FAIR itself,
- 14 FAIR was about a duty to give access to empty
- 15 rooms. The logistical e-mails that were to send
- directions to how go to those rooms was a duty
- 17 that was required to facilitate legal conduct.
- This case is speech that's only
- incidental to speech. When you have a speech
- 20 corrector -- creator, you're in a very different
- 21 space, as the Court articulated in FAIR itself.
- 22 Looking at Wooley and Barnette, where you are
- intruding on the mind and the spirit to force
- 24 someone to create a message that violates their
- 25 convictions. FAIR would be a very different

- 1 case if the law schools were to have had
- 2 advocated for the "don't ask, don't tell"
- 3 policy.
- In terms of whose speech it is, that's
- 5 come up a few times, at worst it's both.
- 6 Third-party perceptions cannot possibly matter
- 7 to this case, or we wouldn't have any of the
- 8 other compelled speech doctrine cases.
- 9 Barnette, Wooley, the newspaper cases, all of
- 10 those, you wouldn't have any. And the
- 11 government would have unfettered authority to
- 12 compel speech because we would all know it was
- 13 the government that was doing it.
- In addition to that, the definition of
- 15 public accommodation, my friends on the other
- side are playing a little fast and loose with
- what the statute says and how they've
- interpreted it in the past. The statute says a
- 19 place of public accommodation. On page 41 of
- 20 Colorado's brief, they say that applies to
- virtual sales as well, meaning the soccer mom
- 22 earning some extra income, trying to sell her
- handmade sign. She's a public accommodation
- 24 under this law. It is broad, and it would take
- 25 away First Amendment rights just for opening a

- 1 business. Certainly, Michelangelo's speech was
- 2 sold and commissioned, but we would all say it
- 3 had protection.
- In addition, the idea that we can't
- 5 give a bright line, the bright line we give is
- 6 the line that this Court has consistently
- 7 followed, and I find it ironic in the United
- 8 States also having to concede they can't give a
- 9 bright line. For some reason, political speech
- 10 is protected but religious speech is not
- 11 protected under this law. The bright line is,
- is the message affected? And, as Justice
- 13 Gorsuch brought up, that line is massive when it
- 14 comes to the distinction between pre-made
- speech, plug-and-play, and speech that you are
- 16 creating in a custom way.
- 17 In conclusion, Ms. Smith's speech has
- been chilled for over six years, and the record
- 19 demonstrates every website she would create
- 20 would create a custom message that is
- 21 celebratory. Colorado asked this Court for the
- 22 power to drive views like Ms. Smith's from the
- 23 public square, views about marriage that this
- 24 Court has held are honorable and decent,
- 25 promises that it has provided that the

1 government would not mandate orthodoxy. 2 Cultural whims may shift, but the compelled speech doctrine should not. Compelled 3 speech crushes the speaker's conscience, and it 4 is the tool of authoritarianism, which is why 5 this Court has never allowed it. 6 7 In the end, it is not Ms. Smith who is asking you to change the law, but Colorado. 8 9 This Court should affirm, again, that public 10 accommodation laws cannot be used to compel 11 speech, and this includes artistic expression, 12 photography, painting, calligraphy, and films, forms of media that the lower courts have 13 14 shockingly refused -- refused -- to recognize as 15 speech when it comes to marriage. And, yes, 16 this Court should give guidance to limit the 17 cruelty that has been imposed by endless 18 litigation on artists like Jack Phillips. 19 One need not agree with a particular 20 belief to affirm that law-abiding people have a right to speak their conscience, including on a 21 2.2 controversial subject like marriage. And that 23 noble principle is rooted in love of neighbor, 24 extending the same rights to others that we want

for ourselves. This right to be free from

_	government coercion or speech is also
2	foundational to our self-government and to the
3	free and fearless pursuit of truth.
4	Thank you. This Court should reverse
5	CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Thank you,
6	counsel.
7	The case is submitted.
8	(Whereupon, at 12:26 p.m., the case
9	was submitted.)
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12	
13	
14	
15	
16	
17	
18	
19	
20	
21	
22	
23	
24	
25	

1
10 [1] 62:9
10:01 [2] 1: 15 3: 2
108 [1] 2:11
12 [1] 62:9
12:26 [1] 154: 8
149 [1] 2:14 15 [2] 43:10 46:12
150 [2] 62 :3,8
17 [2] 12 :10 46 :20
1727 [1] 143:14
1729 [1] 143:14
188A [2] 118: 3,21 189A [1] 118: 3
1940s [2] 26:11 121:22
1950s [2] 26:11 28:22
2
20 [2] 32 :15 116 :4
2017 [1] 12 :10
2022 [1] 1: 11
21-476 [1] 3:4
3
3 [1] 2:4
303 [11] 1: 3 3: 4 7: 8 31: 16
59 :14 106 :24 107 :2 108 :
10 123 :14 131 :17 135 :11 303's [1] 116 :15
304 [1] 135 :11
32 [2] 46 :20 143 :22
4
41 [1] 151 :19
5
5 [1] 1:11
51 [4] 12 :8 16 :7,23 116 :3
52 [2] 16 :8 116 :6
53 [1] 16: 8
54 [2] 16 :8,19
55 [1] 16:11
56 [1] 16: 11 57 [2] 2: 7 116: 21
572 [1] 114: 22
573 [1] 114: 22
6
60 [1] 111: 5
62 [1] 111: 5
7
7A [1] 135 :8
8
81 [1] 85: 3 82 [1] 85: 3
83 [2] 85 :3 106 :25
9
99 [1] 127 :15
A

ability [3] 8:1 86:1 94:17 able [6] 27:9 44:25 47:23 67:22 104:6 148:5 above-entitled [1] 1:13 Absolutely [3] 104:16 105: 3 147:20 accept [4] 72:23 121:5 122: 16 128:25 access [6] 57:25 59:19 65: 7 109:19 121:16 150:14 accommodate [1] 117:21 accommodation [49] 3:16 13:23 24:5.17 32:17 34:18 **41**:23 **42**:10 **51**:9 **54**:1 **60**: 9,20,23 61:17 63:3,23 64:1 69:1 70:7 71:12,22 72:5 **73**:22 **75**:10 **79**:21 **87**:2,9, 23 94:22 95:1,7 99:11 101: 2,23 **102**:3,12,19 **103**:2,4, 10 **105**:17 **121**:11 **128**:16 **131:**8 **132:**2 **151:**15.19.23 153:10 accommodations [32] 17: 14 **54**:5 **57**:24 **59**:25 **60**:3. 18 **61**:8 **62**:1 **63**:1 **109**:2 **115**:2 **118**:14 **120**:13 **121**: 9 124:21 125:2 127:5 128: 4,5,10,13,22 129:7,8,13 130:2 131:11,15 144:25 145:13 146:3.14 accomodation [1] 79:20 account [1] 41:19 acknowledge [2] 134:4 140:5 acknowledges [1] 111:6 across [1] 88:5 act [1] 137:19 acting [1] 53:8 action [1] 45:10 activity [2] 85:5,16 actual [4] 14:23 51:20,20 116:1 actually [14] 7:8 10:2 11:5, 25 43:8 45:14 53:7 70:21, 25 88:10 110:18 113:19 138:24 147:14 ad [1] 59:12 adding [1] 36:16 addition [9] 27:12 32:15 40:2 45:1 53:24 76:20 118: 24 151:14 152:4 additions [2] 8:7 118:4 address [1] 106:21 addressed [1] 69:14 admit [1] 86:23 admitted [1] 54:4 admonition [1] 121:12 adoption [1] 62:18 advancing [2] 44:19 121:2 advantage [1] 68:13 adversary [1] 116:19 advertise [1] 7:6 Advising [2] 111:12,13 advocated [1] 151:2

advocates [1] 123:6 advocating [1] 20:22 affect [2] 30:11 150:5 affected [4] 3:22 10:24 24: 19 **152**:12 affecting [1] 11:2 affects [2] 3:24 141:8 affiliation [2] 130:9 12 affiliations [1] 130:15 affirm [2] 153:9 20 afraid [1] 148:2 afternoon [2] 138:20.22 agency [1] 59:12 aggressive [1] 5:17 ago [7] 20:5 62:3,9,10 86: 24 116:14 141:10 agree [14] 43:18 78:9,20 88: 5 **96**:24 **103**:3 **120**:16 **122**: 15 **126**:17 **127**:16 **133**:12 140:15 148:21 153:19 agreed [1] 14:10 agreeing [1] 46:19 agreement [5] 43:8 44:5. 18 **138**:24 **139**:14 agrees [3] 3:23 21:24 133: ahead [3] 21:5 118:17 139: AL [2] 1:3.6 ALITO [61] 12:5 14:9,21 15: 6 29:17,19 37:4 66:18,25 **67**:8,13,15 **68**:3,18,20 **69**:5, 25 **71**:10 **72**:7.9 **73**:9.25 74:6.13.24 75:15.21.24 79: 17.18 **80**:8.14 **81**:17.22 **82**: 18.24 **83**:5 **106**:11 **125**:22. 23 126:6.10.17.25 127:6. 20,24 128:1,14,20,24 129: 5,21 **130**:11,14,18,24 **131**: 16.24 132:3 146:12 Alito's [3] 37:9 70:18 138:4 allow [4] 32:18 59:10 81:14, allowed [3] 58:17 81:15 **153**:6 allowing [1] 58:19 already [10] 8:5 9:5 45:1 47:12 48:8 53:16 90:13 97: 21 109:8 149:24 alter [1] 150:5 alternatives [1] 44:20 although [1] 62:12 Amber [5] 7:7,7,10,23 67:3 Amendment [21] 25:12 39: 23 43:13,20 52:22 58:4 60: 24 94:3,6,17 95:2 104:25 **105**:1 **107**:20 **111**:23 **128**: 4 130:4 138:8 147:18 149: 24 151:25 Americans [3] 14:4 59:19 121:16 amicus [6] 1:24 2:10 32:16 41:21 96:12 108:20 amount [2] 60:1 127:10

analogies [1] 56:18 analogues [1] 44:2 analogy [1] 94:7 analysis [7] 53:15 55:2 64: 8,23 **83**:21 **85**:10 **134**:12 analytically [1] 85:18 analyze [2] 86:5 138:25 anathema [1] 123:18 Ann [1] 11:8 announce [3] 39:3 4 58:17 announced [1] 71:7 announcement [4] 40:24 67:2 99:14 124:5 announcements [19] 98: 19,20 99:1,2,10 100:5,16, 20 101:8,10,17,20,24 102: 1,8 111:9,16,16,18 announcing [7] 9:17 39:8, 9,17 40:1 44:16,16 anonymous [1] 13:1 another [13] 6:17.18 13:7 18:23 44:9 45:20 52:1 59: 11 **72**:17 **83**:9 **85**:15 **86**:5 98:10 answer [21] 34:14 36:15 70:17 86:11.24 88:13.15 90:13 100:7 101:2 114:16 **127**:6,7,20 **130**:1 **131**:5 **132**:18 **139**:21 **141**:6 **142**: 8 **143**:13 answers [1] 105:5 anti-discrimination [2] 55:22 124:22 anti-vaxxer [1] 49:7 anvbody [10] 26:25 69:7 **76**:6.13 **82**:9 **87**:25 **115**:16. 21 133:4 146:21 apologize [1] 141:12 App [1] 135:8 appealing [3] 114:11 123: 12 **128**:8 APPEARANCES [1] 1:17 Appendix [1] 135:12 applicability [1] 61:18 applicable [4] 63:18 81:4 109:2 125:10 application [1] 70:21 applied [8] 35:7 60:20 81:4 93:5 103:10 112:14 134:7 applies [7] 32:14 36:12 41: 5 **80**:21 **100**:13 **150**:11 **151**:20 apply [12] 4:1 32:11 50:2 **59**:7 **61**:18,24 **70**:25 **78**:19 **102**:23 **126**:12 **129**:14 **138**: applying [7] 41:23 60:3,25 115:1 126:15 130:5 145: 13 appreciate [1] 34:6 approaching [1] 109:15 appropriate [1] 96:9

architects [1] 59:1

areas [1] 121:13 aren't [5] 17:4 53:3 70:10 **77**:12 **146**:2 arque [1] 4:15 arguing [1] 66:20 argument [24] 1:14 2:2,5,8, 12 **3**:4,7 **27**:8 **54**:2 **57**:19 62:20 64:22 66:19 67:9 10 **71**:15 16 **76**:3 **80**:9 **108**:19 125:25 132:15 133:24 149: arguments [4] 63:25 121: 1 129:6.14 arm [1] 42:6 around [1] 21:15 arrangements [1] 6:16 art [3] 3:11 44:17 105:22 articulate [1] 57:9 articulated [5] 42:1 45:2 **53**:16 **62**:21 **150**:21 articulates [1] 45:17 artist [13] 25:9 45:3 49:22. 23 50:1.9.21 51:6 105:18. 19.23 121:23 122:11 artistic [2] 42:11 153:11 artists [8] 43:16.19.20 51:3 **63**:1,5 **143**:25 **153**:18 Aryan [1] 4:20 ashleymadison.com [1] 74:11 Asian [1] 27:25 aside [2] 90:24 146:4 asks [2] 74:1.9 asserting [2] 45:14 54:24 associate [1] 114:10 associated [2] 126:3 127: association [1] 55:5 assume [6] 18:21 79:2 82: 17 **87:**4 **116**:9,19 assuming [9] 8:4 15:1 18: 16 **37**:21 **50**:5 **87**:10 **101**: 22 **102**:11.14 assumption [1] 102:22 attached [1] 16:6 attention [1] 105:11 attractive [2] 112:10 113: attributable [1] 113:15 attribute [2] 107:12 108:6 attribution [1] 126:13 **AUBREY** [1] 1:6 audience [1] 107:25 authentic [3] 55:13 56:25 **57:**5 authoritarianism [1] 153: authority [1] 151:11 authors [3] 17:8 95:11.22 available [6] 35:15 64:7 74: 19 21 111:14 113:12 avoid [3] 22:11 41:2 121:

a.m [2] 1:15 3:2

abhor [1] 146:20

abilities [1] 107:21

avoiding [1] 41:3

awaits [1] 69:23 away [23] 44:4 58:19 65:10, 16,21 67:18,21 86:1 87:10 **95**:8 **99**:1 **100**:21 **101**:19, 23 **102**:1 **103**:18 **106**:12 134:21 140:25 141:22,23 **142**:3 **151**:25 awful [1] 28:7

В back [10] 22:10 27:22 37:8 **46**:3.4 **51**:1 **79**:18 **105**:11 106:19 116:20 backstop [2] 131:3 146:13 bad [1] 127:17 baker [2] 40:8 96:20 band [1] 42:6 banner [1] 103:16 banners [1] 4:23 baptism [1] 4:19 Barbecue [2] 33:10,25 barbers [1] 60:21 barely [1] 84:13 Barnette [2] 150:22 151:9 BARRETT [37] 17:15.18 **18**:20 **19**:14.24 **20**:10 **22**: 22 **42**:15 **47**:3.4 **48**:3 **49**: 14 **50**:18 **97**:8.9.23 **98**:12 99:13 100:2.10.23 101:4. 11 **102**:4,14,18,25 **103**:21 **104:**23 **113:**11 **114:**7 **122:** 23 123:23 124:1 125:9,19 147:6 Barrett's [1] 141:15 based [31] 3:14 22:10 30:3 36:24 42:23,24 52:7 68:16 70:10 79:7 84:5 89:9 92: 14 94:4 96:4 98:10 99:17 101:24 103:19 105:21 115: 17.18 123:25 124:6 135:10 17 142:4 148:16.17 149:24 150:1 basic [2] 43:9 112:8 basically [7] 8:17 15:7 16: 22 33:9 34:7 123:6 148:13 basing [2] 32:25 33:1 basis [13] 36:5,8 66:12 79: 21 80:13 81:20 99:20 104: 5,21 **115**:5 **119**:4 **129**:22 139.9 beautiful [1] 34:3 become [1] 12:23 began [2] 19:2 116:13 begin [2] 19:5 109:14 beginning [1] 120:24 **beginnings** [1] **41:**3 behalf [10] 1:19,21 2:4,7,14 3:8 57:20 86:15 111:17 149:12 behind [1] 41:2

beliefs [22] 11:14 20:17 29: 14,25 51:25 53:12 59:8 86: 20 89:6 90:19 91:19 92:11, 23 108:12 110:19 111:25 **118**:22 **122**:9 **123**:13 **137**: 16 142.4 147.20 believe [23] 9:8,17 11:1 13: 8.10 19:8.9 22:2 23:4.7.11. 17,19 **31:**7 **58:**25 **106:**8 109:12 117:4 121:6 126:1. 22.25 145:10 believed [1] 20:13 believes [7] 4:8 35:24 36: 22 39:24 40:2 41:1 67:3 believing [2] 30:1 149:17 below [3] 111:10,19 118:3 Beneath [1] 49:18 besides [1] 41:17 betray [1] 41:5 between [22] 9:8 14:22,23 18:17 19:12 23:11 29:15 **43**:8 **51**:3 **57**:11 **58**:12 **67**: 4 11 73:16 90:19 91:21 106:9 114:1 126:23 138:9 **149**:17 **152**:14 beyond [2] 114:4 130:7 Bible [2] 47:22,24 biblical [2] 18:22 58:11 Big [4] 72:20 77:6 103:20 122:25 bigger [1] 7:8 bigoted [1] 59:10 bit [6] 8:14.16 41:12 59:23 78:2 134:17 black [16] 4:18 14:3 23:11 27:25 31:5.5 32:24 34:5 **41:**7 **70:**15 **75:**3.4.7.13.16 **79:**18 Blackman [1] 72:12 blacks [1] 33:11 blatantly [1] 71:18

blends [1] 3:11 bless [4] 12:3 49:5 105:13

106:5 Blesses [4] 76:22 78:3 132: 11 133 14 bloa [1] 116:12 boards [1] 65:3

Bob [1] 104:17 body [1] 49:6 bono [1] 53:2 book [2] 13:1 17:8 books [3] 94:11,13,17 both [12] 6:12 18:9 19:1 28: 12 **45**:7 **61**:14 **108**:3 **121**: 20 128:3 138:11 140:7 **151:**5 bottom [4] 57:3 106:8,25

123:15 Bray [1] 125:13 breadth [2] 53:25 71:15 BRIAN [3] 1:22 2:9 108:19

bride [1] 48:24 bridesmaids [1] 17:4 brief [16] 32:16 41:21 43:10. 16 46:12,21 59:23 62:1,11 64:12 72:11 96:13 132:8 143:22,22 151:20 briefs [3] 43:7,22 44:5 bright 5 131:14 152:5,5,9, bring [1] 116:12 bringing [1] 26:14 broad [6] 25:12 34:19 36:

10 **44**:5 **87**:7 **151**:24 broadly [2] 103:2 128:15 brought [1] 152:13 build [3] 72:14,19 108:8 bulletin [1] 65:3 bump [1] 130:3 bunch [1] 6:14 burden [11] 46:22 83:13,13 **114**:18 **115**:10,11 **134**:10, 11 140:22 141:7 145:5 burdens [1] 144:9 burned [1] 47:24

bus [1] 62:18 business [29] 26:6.9.23 45: 11 **50**:24 **55**:6.7 **56**:21 **57**: 25 61:3,4 68:24 84:1,3 99: 16 **101**:6 **109**:1,6 **122**:25 123:1,10 127:10 128:17,17

129:12 **131**:24 **132**:1 **145**: 14 152:1 business's [1] 118:11 businesses [2] 58:24 59:

buy [2] 48:8 89:25

C

cabin [1] 105:7 cabined [1] 121:14 Cake [6] 22:3 30:24 40:15 46:5.5 85:12 cakes [2] 21:15 22:4 Cakeshop [1] 121:12 call [7] 6:11 52:12 89:13,13 14,16 93:15 called [2] 26:8 112:8 calligrapher [1] 25:14 calligraphy [1] 153:12 calling [1] 93:19 came [2] 1:13 64:18 campus [2] 111:22 141:21 cannot [8] 42:10 58:15.17 82:13.16 101:23 151:6 153:10 capacities [1] 14:4 capture [3] 26:16,18,18 captures [1] 18:3 card [1] 66:10 care [2] 62:17 77:21 career [2] 113:16 114:8 careful [2] 17:23,23 carefully [1] 121:14 Carpenter [1] 96:13 carry [1] 103:16

carveouts [1] 121:13 carves [1] 4:18 carving [1] 61:17 Case [98] 3:4 4:2 5:5,23 6: 8,8,25 **10**:5 **14**:15,19,23 **19**: 19 **29:**2,5 **31:**11 **32:**16 **33:** 5,10 **35**:14,21 **37**:10 **42**:4 **43**:9,22 **45**:25 **46**:1 **53**:19 **56**:12 **62**:1,3,13,17,25 **63**: 13,22 **64**:10,14 **69**:13 **77**: 12 **78:**20 **86:**6 **90:**11 **96:**16. 17.23 **100**:7.11.13 **103**:5.7. 17 **104**:18 **107**:19 **109**:18 **110**:15 **112**:13,17 **114**:14 **115**:12 **117**:13 **119**:14 **131**: 21,21 132:22 133:19,21,23 **134**:5,15 **135**:1,4 **137**:4,23 138:14,25 139:17 140:2,3, 6,11,16,21 **142**:12 **143**:9 **144:**9,14,19 **145:**22 **146:**9 **147**:24 **150**:1.7.13.18 **151**: 17154:78 cases [24] 5:10 19:20.21. 22 **24**:17 **36**:13 **51**:14 **53**:4. 6 61:11,23 63:10,17 90:20 91:21 109:16 110:21 113: 24 **136**:21 **138**:11 **145**:4 150:3 151:8,9 Categorical [5] 135:9,10 149:20,21,22 categories [4] 18:11 20:13 24:2 80:4 categorizations [1] 104: 25 category [1] 144:15 cater [1] 125:5 caterer [5] 46:1.4.11 52:24. caterers [2] 43:11 44:12 Catholic [3] 4:19 25:14 123:5 cause [2] 110:3 127:9 caveat [1] 46:13 CDO [1] 113:12 celebrate [15] 4:19 10:25 12:15 16:12 39:2 40:22 48: 21 **72**:15.19 **91**:17 **100**:4. 18 **101**:15,18 **117**:5 celebrates [4] 5:14.14 91: 15 **120**:3 celebrating [2] 49:12 116:

celebration [1] 116:2

celebratory [1] 152:21

ceremony [1] 116:21

certain [11] 26:16,18 42:17,

Certainly [9] 42:21 60:8 63:

18 **44**:21 **49**:24 **52**:20 **56**:

22 63:13 104:8 125:15

5 64:2 69:21 87:22 98:4

cetera [9] 17:25 60:21 61:

central [1] 57:23

108:7 152:1

certiorari [1] 15:22

12 65:4 69:19 98:6 101:17 148.12 chairs [2] 40:9,13 challenge [2] 136:17,18 challenges [1] 5:7 chambers [1] 6:7 chance [1] 139:5 change [17] 36:17 38:10 **48:**23.23.24 **65:**13 **68:**15 85:9 92:18 109:5.13 113: 18 **138**:1 **142**:9.11.12 **153**: changed [1] 121:7 changes [4] 49:1,15 110:2 127:20 changing [6] 48:24,25 49: 1,10 57:9 88:24 characteristic [6] 75:14 82:16 83:2 99:7,22 101:25 characteristics [9] 13:13 63:13 70:11 75:9 80:3 92: 24 109:12 129:22 130:6 characterization [1] 33:4 characterize [3] 43:23 44: 7.8 charge [1] 101:15 chef [2] 34:2,11 cherished [2] 18:3 52:7 CHIEF [58] 3:3,9 21:8 34: 16,22 **35**:2,13,18 **36**:1,14 37:1 41:9 43:5 47:2 50:19 **57**:16,21 **62**:6,7,8 **63**:8,19 **64**:9.25 **65**:19 **66**:4.6 **79**: 14 83:22 84:8 93:24 97:7 **103:**22 **108:**15.18.22 **109:** 18 **110**:12.20 **111**:1.4.12. 21 117:24 118:2.9.16.19. 20 125:20 132:4 138:17 143:18 147:5 149:8.13 150:10 154:5 child [3] 27:21 75:6,13 children [14] 4:22 26:15,19 27:7,23 28:1 54:18 55:14 **63**:16 **75**:3,16 **122**:12 **137**: 14.20 chilled [2] 5:19 152:18 choice [3] 49:6 94:10,23 choose [19] 13:11.14 58: 10.13 67:22 68:2 70:11 73: 19 **78**:22 **87**:13 **88**:10 **89**: 11.17.20 98:7 99:16.17 100:3 131:20 chooses [2] 73:17 78:22 choosing [2] 67:24 99:21 chose [1] 63:22 chosen [2] 91:8 98:8 Christian [2] 72:17 123:4 Christians [3] 128:9.11 Christmas [2] 58:13 16

carve-out [1] 125:10

belabor [2] 120:23 136:25

belief [10] 23:1 27:24 31:4

55:7 90:5 92:16.19 118:5

137:19 153:20

Christmas-related [1] 58:

Christmases [1] 26:10

church [4] 4:20 47:25 86:

19 144:1 Circuit [3] 54:3 86:11,25 Circuit's [1] 113:22 circumstance [4] 85:5 88: 9 99:20 124:14 circumstances [4] 66:2 **80**:6 **98**:5 **103**:12 cisgender [2] 18:9 20:2 cite [1] 62:10 City [1] 62:10 claim [6] 109:20 110:23 134:6 135:14 136:9 148: claims [1] 58:1 Clan [1] 75:12 clarify [3] 19:25 20:6 47:11 clarity [1] 28:25 class [3] 13:25 45:21 122: classic [2] 26:11 121:21 classification [1] 119:8 Clause [3] 59:5 105:7 132: clear [15] 24:7.10.12 29:4 **51:**5 **52:**10 **68:**23 **105:**5 106:3.13 107:23 119:16 **121**:19 **134**:8 **148**:8 clearer [1] 120:8 clearly [4] 10:20 109:24 **111:**10 **116**:15 clerks [1] 6:6 click [1] 6:14 client [18] 8:12.15.16 12:18 18:7.14 37:13.14 38:23 39: 19 22 **42**:19 **46**:15 **51**:2 6 64:5 135:25 137:8 client's [5] 21:21 27:17 31: 22 34:23 35:3 clientele [1] 70:11 clients [8] 8:17 33:6,7 34:4 **68**:9 **82**:6 **118**:12 **119**:2 closer [1] 150:13 club [4] 123:3,8,17 124:8 clubs [1] 69:15 CO [1] 116:17 coding [1] 47:17 coercion [1] 154:1 coffee [1] 116:16 colleagues [2] 84:25 115: 25 college [1] 122:25 colloquy [2] 42:14 97:23 color [5] 17:25 26:24 27:1 29:23 57:6 Colorado [41] 1:20 3:15,23 **4**:2,6,24 **5**:18 **21**:24 **22**:3 35:7 41:12,17 54:3 58:5 69:13 71:8 74:17,18 86:13, 25 87:12 88:9.14.17 92:17 93:8.17 96:5 112:13 115: 14 **116**:17 **119**:3,6 **127**:3 **132**:9 **133**:12 **134**:6.8 **143**: 11 **152**:21 **153**:8 Colorado's [9] 4:12,15 44:

19.25 **50**:13 **65**:7 **71**:5 **94**: 3 151:20 come [10] 28:14 56:22 105: 24 112:18 131:21 132:21 **134**:19,22 **137**:24 **151**:5 comes [16] 18:6,24 21:25 **43**:22 **52**:14 **62**:3 **65**:9 **73**: 6 97:24 99:14 106:4 135:4 5 **137**:23 **152**:14 **153**:15 coming [5] 8:18 46:3,4 47: 9 69:17 commentary [2] 47:23,24 commerce [4] 32:13 48:1. 2 50:7 commercial [5] 58:6 84:3 101:7 108:25 129:18 commission [1] 85:15 commissioned [1] 152:2 common [1] 61:11 communicate [1] 100:4 community [5] 100:19 101: consistently [1] 152:6 8.19 **127:**13.15 company [33] 33:11 58:1, 10,14,18,22 **59**:6,8,11,14 63:2,22 65:13 66:1,12 68: 12 78:21 85:21,25 90:23, 25 91:7,23 92:1,3 97:17,20 98:1,7 103:18 106:23 141: 21,24 compel [10] 4:6,16 42:10 **50**:17 **86**:13 **88**:14 **112**:14 **123**:19 **151**:12 **153**:10 compelled [48] 8:9 13:3 15:16 16:2 19:22 20:19 21: 23 22:6 24:11.14.14 25:16 30:14.18 32:11.14 35:10 36:11 41:2.13 42:15 50:13 **53:**22 **63:**10 **64:**15.15.18. 22 82:20 83:16 96:23.24 97:14 98:3 102:5,7 111:24 112:13 126:1,2,3,7,12 134: 25 150:4 151:8 153:3,3 compelling [11] 9:19 11:2 30:20 77:11 83:12,16 110: 16,18 **121**:15 **143**:25 **145**:6 complaint [1] 65:15 completed [1] 32:13 complicating [1] 60:14 component [1] 77:17 compulsion [4] 110:5,14, 15 **114**:18 computer [1] 82:8 concede [1] 152:8 conceding [1] 46:21 concept [3] 11:24 40:1,25 concepts [1] 20:10 concern [2] 63:9 121:2 concerned [1] 137:2 concerns [2] 62:14 77:11 concession [1] 149:19 conclusion [1] 152:17 concrete [2] 133:22 136:

conduct [19] 33:16 46:25

53:5.14.15 58:6 60:7 61: 21 96:10 110:7 114:20 **115**:4 **124**:15,19 **125**:16 126:8 140:24 145:9 150: conflating [1] 34:10 confronted [2] 145:9,10 confused [1] 21:19 connect [1] 78:13 conscience [5] 3:17 9:10 **41:**5 **153:**4.21 consciences [1] 34:20 consequence [1] 81:10 conservative [1] 142:5 consider [2] 72:21 138:12 considered [6] 3:20 5:7,11 **54**:4 **64**:16 **99**:10 considering [1] 14:18 consistent [5] 52:21 90:6 102:9 117:14 127:4 constant [1] 142:11 constitutional [7] 80:1.7.9 **83**:3 **112**:6 **131**:3 **146**:13 constitutionally [1] 35:7 consultants [1] 59:1 consulting [1] 59:13 contained [2] 22:16 27:12 contemplate [1] 144:10 content [8] 9:25 10:3,9,10 11:5 89:17 117:12 127:23 content-based [1] 9:23 content-neutral [7] 110:7 114:19 115:3 126:8 140: 24 144:25 145:8 context [16] 13:23 14:2 5 **15**:18 **39**:21 **49**:1.14 **54**:22 **70:**24 **124:**13 **125:**11.12 **126:**11 **128:**5 **134:**1.4 contexts [3] 5:8 125:15 126:15 contours [4] 86:24 89:10, 11 **125**:24 contractual [1] 50:3 contradict [1] 39:25 contradicts [1] 4:9 contrary [3] 11:14 53:11 110:19 contrast [1] 131:8 control [2] 68:15 135:18 controversial [1] 153:22 conundrum [1] 41:17 convey [5] 38:18 51:18 52: 20 **112**:2 **144**:11 conveys [1] 18:3 convictions [8] 25:17 36: 23,24 **46:**24 **144:**5,17,22 150:25 coordinating [1] 111:8 core [5] 25:17 53:11 129: 18 130:22 146:14 corporate [1] 122:18 correct [16] 24:14 42:20 63: 19 **66**:4.23 **71**:3 **76**:14 **83**:

25 84:6 95:2 104:16 111:5 125:8 133:18 140:12.17 corrector [1] 150:20 correlated [1] 146:24 couldn't [5] 35:25 50:6 99: 22 101:25 120:8 Counsel [11] 5:3 34:23 41: 11 57:17 59:22 79:15 108: 16 119:5 139:24 149:9 154:6 counting [2] 116:7,8 country [1] 60:23 couple [59] 6:13 14:12 15: 13,25 16:22 17:19 18:6,23 19:16 20:2 22:23 30:12,16 **32**:24,24,25 **38**:20,21 **47**: 10 **48**:19,19 **49**:13 **51**:22 **58:**23 **65:**11,12,16,18 **67:** 17 **71**:19 **72**:24 **73**:5 **76**:7, 15,17,25 **77:**2,4,5 **86:**24 **92:** 4 **98**:10.11 **106**:4 **107**:13. 14 **108**:13 **116**:18 **119**:17. 23 **122:**24 **123:**10,14,18 **124**:4,11 **136**:4,5 **145**:24 couple's [9] 16:18 21:17, 22 22:6 31:20 48:25 73:24 112:11 116:10 couples [22] 7:12,24 8:1 31:5,6 33:18 35:6,16 45:9 **58**:15,20 **59**:12 **65**:21 **67**: 19,21 68:9 79:9,10 126:20 **127**:11 **133**:16.17 course [6] 49:11 64:21 80: 22 86:7 94:20 112:22 courses [1] 69:18 COURT [85] 1:1.14 3:10.18. 20.25 5:6.10 9:5 10:19 13: 24 **14**:18 **19**:19,21 **22**:11, 13 24:17 25:17 27:13 28:7 **29**:10,11,12,20 **30**:19 **31**: 11 **33:**21 **36:**9 **41:**22,25 **42:** 6,8 **45**:1,3,16 **53**:16 **55**:1 56:2,3 57:22 59:17 62:13, 21 64:19 66:13,17 69:20 71:7 72:5 81:1,12,13 94: 24 96:8 103:11 108:23 **109:**23 **110:**4.13 **111:**6.10. 19 **115**:1.6 **124**:14.17 **125**: 17 134:10 136:8 137:17 **143**:14 **145**:9 **148**:21.24 **149**:5,25 **150**:8,21 **152**:6, 21,24 153:6,9,16 154:4 Court's [14] 5:2 9:7 54:14 **59**:21 **83**:25 **109**:16 **110**: 11 **113**:23 **121**:12 **125**:13 131:5 137:12 138:8 150:3 courts [4] 91:1 135:18 136: 6 153:13 cover [1] 25:13 coverage [1] 36:6 covered [1] 36:4 craft [3] 101:6.7 113:13

4,24 **5**:13 **7**:19 **10**:25 **19**: 13 20:16,21 22:4 23:15 35: 25 36:21,22 37:23 48:5,9 **54**:17 **85**:17 **112**:14 **118**: 12 119:2 143:3 144:10,12 150:24 152:19,20 created [7] 7:1 22:14 35:22 **47**:12 **48**:5 8 **49**:22 creates [2] 3:23 34:2 creating [14] 7:14 10:17 11: 22 33:24 34:7.17 40:16 44: 14.15.23 47:6 48:16 53:21 152:16 creation [2] 15:11 40:15 CREATIVE [9] 1:3 3:5 29:3 **59**:14 **106**:24 **107**:3 **108**: 11 123:15 131:18 creator [8] 8:6 13:24 15:17 29:3 32:7 45:14.17 150:20 creators [1] 42:11 credible [1] 110:23 credibly [1] 132:25 credit [1] 66:10 creed [1] 119:9 criticizing [1] 144:1 cross [2] 4:19 41:7 cruelty [1] 153:17 crushes [1] 153:4 crushing [1] 34:19 Cultural [1] 153:2 curated [1] 72:3 curiae [3] 1:24 2:11 108:20 curious [1] 41:16 custom [9] 3:12 4:19 40:15. 16 **46**:5 **105**:20.21 **152**:16. customer [8] 25:6.11 52: 14 64:4 84:5 86:2 97:18 109.5 customer's [5] 25:10 73:8, 24 106:1 115:22 customers [6] 35:11 47:18 **52**:6 **55**:14 **59**:2 **121**:20 customizable [1] 91:16 customization [1] 122:7 customize [5] 17:24 47:10 **51**:7 **52**:16 **85**:14 customized [8] 5:13 35:23 48:5 51:9 81:24.25 85:4 **136**:3 customizing [3] 26:12 122: 5,6 cut [1] 37:11 D d'etre [1] 123:7 D.C [3] 1:10,18,23

dance [1] 49:19 dancing [2] 116:12,23 danger [1] 126:13 date [9] 6:12 7:20 12:9,12 16:23 38:10 116:4.6.13 dating [7] 16:15,19,25 74:2, 3.11 78:12

crafts [1] 101:9

create [31] 3:12,14,16,25 4:

day [4] 16:23 28:15 84:18 116:9 days [2] 27:23 116:7 deal [3] 64:13 77:6 143:22 dealing [2] 23:2 110:13 dealt [2] 41:17 143:24 dearly [1] 52:9 debate [1] 25:15 debates [1] 123:8 **December** [1] 1:11 decent [3] 29:25 81:9 152: decide [5] 8:2 47:23 70:5 100:13 104:23 decided [2] 19:5,19 decides [2] 98:24 150:1 deciding [1] 3:13 decision [4] 30:8 54:14 63: 16 **137**:12 decisions [1] 70:9 declares [1] 3:15 decline [1] 43:14 declined [1] 42:24 declines [1] 42:22 declining [1] 120:9 deeply [11] 31:4 110:3,24 **112**:23 **113**:10 **144**:4,17,22 145:7 149:2.3 default [1] 78:19 define [9] 89:10 96:3 115: 18 **128**:15 **130**:2,11,14,20 148:20 defined [1] 143:12 defines [2] 79:19 128:16 defining [5] 67:22 92:13 **103:1 148:**17.18 definition [3] 87:7 129:13 151:14 degree [3] 71:23 72:1.1 demand [4] 69:9,9 70:4 **131**:18 demeaning [1] 25:18 Democrat [4] 4:13 30:17 41:6 125:1 Democratic [1] 50:11 demonstrates [1] 152:19 denial [3] 129:23 149:21. denunciation [1] 66:22 **Denver** [1] **1:20** deny [2] 122:21 142:18 denying [3] 133:1,2 142:20 departed [1] 52:9 Department [1] 1:23 dependent [2] 80:10 127: depending [1] 103:3 depends [7] 61:2 74:17,23 **86**:6 **112**:3 **134**:17,23 depict [2] 26:22 56:25 depicted [5] 27:19,20 122: 1.10.14 depiction [1] 56:25 depictions [4] 55:10,18

121:24 122:8 Deputy [1] 1:22 describe [2] 141:18 142:2 described [5] 14:13 112:7. 17 **117**:17 **136**:2 describes [1] 123:13 describing [3] 58:12 119:1 142:2 description [1] 63:24 design [7] 7:2 45:22 47:14 **59**:11 **122**:24 **141**:21 **144**: Designed [4] 106:24 108: 10 123:16.16 designer [31] 8:24 9:1 11: 12 13:7 14:10 20:20 25:13 **28**:11 **30**:17,23 **46**:16 **49**: 16 **66**:20 **67**:16,17 **68**:8 **70**: 2 72:14,19 73:1,16,18,19 81:14 94:7 95:18.21 96:19 **106**:6 **107**:13 **108**:12 designer's [3] 78:1 107:21 147:18 designers [3] 43:24 44:7.9 designing [1] 47:9 designs [1] 7:18 desire [1] 98:15 details [2] 37:22 112:10 determination [2] 62:17 69:22 determinations [1] 63:15 determinative [1] 36:9 determine [4] 19:23 45:2 70:24 98:7 determined [1] 118:21 determining [1] 83:12 developina [1] 123:1 Development [1] 114:8 devoid [1] 63:21 difference [12] 23:10 38: 20 67:10 68:4 90:19.21 91: 6 103:20 117:10 124:3 139:18.20 differences [2] 14:22.22 different [57] 4:17 9:6 10:7 11:14 20:4 26:1.3 28:2.23 29:13 30:6 33:9 37:10 38: 18.22 **40**:11 **41**:14 **43**:16, 19 44:10.11.17 46:2 48:4. 11,13 49:5,6,7 53:14 56:18 **68**:16 **77**:7.8.10 **80**:23 **83**: 21 85:12,17 87:7 90:11 94: 14 95:9,19 98:15 103:8 **110**:14 **112**:6,12 **123**:3 **124**:10 **133**:25 **134**:12 **138**: 2,5 150:20,25 differently [4] 41:14 112: 18 131:22 137:23 difficult [10] 5:16 29:1 42:3 76:2 80:1 102:21 103:7 **106**:15 **121**:4 **132**:12 difficulty [2] 78:6 105:5 dine [1] 69:19

dinner [1] 116:22

direct [7] 56:11 78:16 105: 11 115:10 134:11 144:9 **145**:5 directions [1] 150:16 directly [4] 61:9 63:18 111: 25 127:22 disability [4] 13:14 22:25 24:1 59:3 disabled [10] 13:10 22:23. 24 23:4 30:11 16 31:6 32: 23.24 34:6 disagree [19] 13:12 65:25 87:20 88:4.7 89:2 90:1 92: 7 **93**:20 **97**:4.5.9 **109**:23 **110**:4 **119**:13 **125**:6 **139**:2 142:7 145:7 disagreed [3] 59:15 120:4 **139**:13 disagreement [4] 44:6 81: 9 98:14 139:11 disagrees [3] 51:11 86:16 99:3 discretion [2] 99:12 100:9 discriminate [5] 58:23 79: 21 81:20 115:17 125:3 discriminating [3] 27:3 **115**:4 **148**:15 discrimination [18] 53:20 66:9,16 80:5 83:20 104:3 **120**:1,11 **124**:18 **139**:9 **141:**4 **142:**9 **143:**1,6,13 146:25 147:1,3 discriminatory [3] 58:6 **112**:22 **131**:12 discussed [2] 58:20 69:20 discussion [4] 52:17 71:4 80:21 84:22 dislikes [1] 41:15 disparages [1] 99:3 display [2] 4:22 85:13 dispute [1] 57:23 distinction [9] 51:5 63:11 64:13 73:16 91:7.21 95:15 127:25 152:14 distinctions [1] 79:25 distinguish [2] 104:1 138: **distributing** [1] **111:**16 divina [1] 116:17 divorced [1] 19:5 Doctrine [9] 13:3 16:2 20: 20 32:11,14 36:12 41:2 **151:**8 **153:**3 Doe [1] 136:16 dogs [1] 116:17 doing [9] 17:3 35:1 42:2 55: 8 67:19 80:13 121:7 141:3 **151**:13 done [3] 87:15 101:18 137: doubt [1] 149:4 doubted [1] 149:3 down [9] 22:19 34:2 43:22 47:8 73:4 113:13 116:7.8

eview

124:4
draw [5] 22:12 29:1,12 114:
1 126:6
drawing [1] 73:15
draws [2] 30:8,10
dressed [1] 75:6
drive [1] 152:22
during [1] 26:7
duty [2] 150:14,16

E
e-mails [4] 65:3 109:22
111:8 150:15
each [10] 19:4,6 26:12 52:
14 57:7 85:5 116:16,18
122:6 144:23
earlier [3] 26:1 67:1 77:21

e-mails [4] 65:3 109:22 each [10] 19:4.6 26:12 52: 14 **57:**7 **85:**5 **116:**16.18 earlier [3] 26:1 67:1 77:21 earning [1] 151:22 easier [2] 79:10,11 easily [2] 3:22 58:8 easy [1] 76:1 eat [1] 34:2 edge [3] 29:2,5 78:20 editorial [2] 98:21 99:12 editors [1] 17:9 effect [1] 58:7 effort [1] 45:7 either [8] 16:1 19:13 21:16 29:6 42:20 62:3 64:23 119: element [1] 77:16 **ELENIS** [2] 1:6 3:5 else's [1] 17:10 embrace [1] 19:10

emphasize [1] 110:22 emphatic [1] 114:22 empower [1] 58:24 empty [3] 64:19 111:3 150: enacted [1] 81:9 end [6] 26:24 35:5 44:21 75: 4 138:19 153:7 endless [1] 153:17 endorse [1] 33:13 endorsement [3] 15:23 107:7 148:4 endorsing [3] 11:16,21 148.6 ends [1] 41:3 enforcement [1] 5:18 enforcing [2] 71:8,9 engage [2] 69:2 110:18 engaged [4] 6:7 61:20 72: 13.18 engagement [3] 18:1,8,24 engages [1] 64:4 engaging [4] 33:25 40:14

52:25 **61**:2

11,12

enough [4] 25:13 34:19 73:

ensure [3] 13:3 34:19 41:4

ensuring [2] 65:6 121:15

ensured [1] 93:10

enter [1] 128:12

entered [1] 32:12 entering [1] 147:2 enterprise [2] 101:7,12 entire [2] 41:1 45:21 entirely [2] 63:21 148:21 entitled [4] 109:1,10 121:8 136:10 entity [2] 86:16 131:9 environmental [1] 123:2 equal [5] 45:7 57:25 59:19 65:7 121:16 equate [2] 80:17 138:5 equivalent [2] 4:10 115:7 era [2] 26:16.19 ERIC [3] 1:20 2:6 57:19 escape [1] 131:10 espouse [2] 82:11,14 espoused [1] 114:6 **ESQ** [4] 2:3,6,9,13 **ESQUIRE** [1] 1:18 essence [1] 144:15 essentially [8] 8:5 19:11 20:22 35:11 48:15 51:7 53: 20 150:8 establishments [1] 129: ET [11] 1:3,6 17:25 60:21 61:12 65:3 69:19 98:6 101: 17 148:1.1 ethnicity [1] 24:1 evaluate [1] 78:25 even [36] 4:17 10:2 14:20 15:18 18:20 28:6 29:10 38: 18 40:3.18.21.23 46:21 49: 4 51:14 58:20 62:12 65:16 **66**:22 **71**:18 **78**:19 **80**:11 86:19 88:8 89:25 97:2 102: 9 105:20 116:1.7.16 120:9 138:14 139:4 141:7 143:4 event [2] 125:5.5 events [1] 6:15 Everybody [7] 55:15,16 56: 22 76:5 90:9 116:9 121:25 everyone [12] 44:24 68:14, 21 89:9,25 90:15 103:14 **114:**8 **142:**18.18.20.22 everything [5] 11:9 76:18 103:1 123:17 142:10 evidence [3] 107:10 108:9 113:20 exact [5] 55:1 62:4 86:23 **97:**24 **98:**9 exactly [15] 11:10 19:18 35: 12 47:11 48:10,17 61:4 65: 17 **113**:3 **117**:22 **120**:25 **134**:3,24 **137**:1 **144**:14 example [23] 11:25 15:14 **21:**25.25 **22:**3 **30:**11 **44:**12 50:10 56:10 57:12 65:9 71: 7 75:1 79:19 82:17 83:14 86:14 91:24 93:4 95:22 104:18 121:21 142:5 examples [6] 10:6 28:13

44:14 60:20 116:2 117:11

exceeds [1] 69:9 except [6] 35:15 51:10,22 **61:**20 **116:**8 **142:**15 exchange [1] 147:10 exclude [1] 137:13 excludes [1] 96:4 excluding [4] 92:13 114: 23 24 137:19 exclusion [1] 81:12 **exclusively** [1] **73**:12 excused [1] 93:19 exemption [6] 59:5 105:8 **109**:1 **117**:20 **118**:1 **121**:9 exercise [2] 77:11 132:20 Exhibit [2] 116:3.6 existential [1] 72:21 expanded [1] 129:10 expected [1] 38:24 experiencing [1] 32:20 explain [2] 109:14 140:18 explaining [1] 60:2 explicit [2] 51:19 148:12 explicitly [2] 73:2 147:19 explored [1] 109:8 express [15] 9:9 19:10,16 **25**:16 **26**:9 **46**:23 **53**:7.8 87:24 90:17 112:15 114:5 **138**:1 **147**:19 **149**:15 expressed [3] 38:25 41:22 **63**:9 expresses [2] 87:19 146: expressing [8] 10:18 14:1 21:16 53:10 54:23 55:19 **56**:13 **137**:25 expression [11] 4:16.17 **42:**11 **58:**3.7 **85:**17 **106:**17 **108**:1 **121**:20 **124**:24 **153**: expressions [1] 27:18 expressive [14] 26:5 52:18 **53**:5,15 **58**:25 **60**:6 **61**:20 **85**:4,15 **109**:10 **120**:10,17, 21 127:23 extending [1] 153:24 extent [5] 51:20 52:3 63:14 96:6 110:9 extra [1] 151:22 extremely [1] 109:8 face [2] 48:15 80:1

face [2] 48:15 80:1 facial [1] 136:17 facilitate [2] 113:9 150:17 fact [10] 9:13 29:24 42:16 60:15 73:9 79:4 81:4 111: 22 119:14 148:23 fact-specific [1] 69:22 factor [4] 60:14 64:8 69:21 70:8 factors [1] 63:21 facts [14] 5:9 14:16,18 33:5 42:22 64:2 69:23 70:19 107:8 133:22 134:24 136:

19.22 142:16 fair [19] 33:4 64:12.24 65:1 **80**:17 **109**:17 **115**:13 **126**: 9 134:10 140:3 145:10 **148:**24 **150:**2,11,11,13,14, 21 25 fairly [3] 43:22 96:14 104:7 faith [4] 52:15 90:1.7 92:8 faiths [2] 88:6 90:4 fall [5] 29:6 83:5 6 8 8 false [5] 9:18 11:1 35:25 40:2 41:1 familiar [6] 50:1 74:7 93:10. 17 **128**:3 **131**:14 families [5] 26:24 27:1,3,5 55:14 family [5] 12:19,20 52:7,15 **82**:2 far [5] 71:24 107:18 129:1, 10 134:8 farther [1] 129:16 fashion [1] 91:1 fast [2] 34:24 151:16 favorite [3] 6:17 8:21 137: fearless [1] 154:3 feature [1] 58:11 feel [4] 17:24 77:18 82:3 84: feelings [2] 26:16,18 feels [1] 78:2 felt [2] 31:4 96:12 ferreted [1] 45:16 few [5] 5:4 59:25 88:20 143: 23 151:5 Fiftv [1] 16:17 Fifty-eight [1] 116:21 Fifty-five [1] 116:13 Fifty-four [3] 16:14,25 116: 12 Fifty-nine [1] 116:23 Fifty-three [3] 16:13,24 116:11 Fifty-two [1] 16:23 figure [5] 70:24 105:16 143: 9 11 144:18 filed [2] 32:16 41:20 fill [1] 47:20 filmmaker [1] 145:2 filmmakers [1] 143:24 films [1] 153:12 final [3] 24:20 45:15,18 find [6] 29:11 89:5 132:12. 12 **138**:9 **152**:7 finds [2] 90:18 91:18 fine [5] 4:25 70:12 106:7 133:16.17 finger [1] 95:18 finish [2] 72:10 90:12 firm [2] 27:24 118:5 firmly [1] 86:23

firms [1] 114:9

first [42] 3:4 4:2 10:19 13:

23 17:8 20:1 25:12 31:11

39:23 43:13.19 48:14 52: 22 56:1 58:4 60:24 65:1 67·14 83·25 91·24 94·3 6 16 **95**:2 **104**:25 **105**:1 **107**: 20 108:3 124:12 125:25 **128**:4 **130**:4 **131**:2 **134**:18 138:8 139:13 140:22 141: 2 145:24 147:17 149:24 **151**:25 fit [1] 62:20 flesh [1] 25:24 FLETCHER [79] 1:22 2:9 **108**:18.19.22 **110**:20 **111**:4. 15 **112**:3 **113**:3,19 **114**:15 **117**:2,7,22 **118**:9,25 **119**: 10,15,20,25 **120**:6,18,23 **122**:15,23 **123**:21,24 **124**: 11 **125**:12 **126**:5,14,21 **127**: 2,19 128:1,19,23 129:15, 25 130:13,16,19 131:1,23 132:7.17 133:8.18 135:3. 10.22 **137**:10 **138**:22 **139**:2. 12.18 140:4.8.12.17.20 **141:**2.6.11.18 **142:**6.20.24 143:1,10 144:23 145:17,20, 23 146:2.6.11 148:13 florist [1] 40:8 focus [3] 56:19 89:23 144: focused [2] 96:10 126:6 folks [2] 80:22 122:8 follow [3] 22:13 45:4 143: followed [1] 152:7 following [1] 41:25 follows [1] 62:11 food [3] 52:5.18.19 force [4] 4:13.21.24 150:23 forced [6] 20:21 54:17 82: 10,13 144:10,21 forces [2] 4:4 110:3 forcing [2] 122:11 144:3 foreclosing [1] 136:20 form [3] 109:22 120:11 129: forms [1] 153:13 forth [6] 7:2.22 22:10.22 39: 10 81:1 forthright [1] 10:7 forum [1] 101:15 foster [1] 62:17 found [4] 25:18 30:19 33: 22 113:10 foundational [1] 154:2 framed [1] 135:14 framework [5] 10:18 13:22 **58**:8 **61**:22 **150**:9 free [12] 31:10 43:13 44:2 **45**:9 **46**:18 **59**:5 **77**:11 **105**:

freelancer [1] 50:22 friend [8] 54:3 63:2 70:20 **71:**5 **82:**3 **93:**4 **105:**4 **108:** friends [6] 12:19.20 34:21 **86**:11 **97**:25 **151**:15 frustrates [1] 134:14 frustrating [1] 133:21 full [4] 33:19 34:2 59:18 87: fully [2] 17:24 34:7 Fulton [6] 62:10 69:21 72:6 81:1 94:24 131:5 funny [3] 16:14,19,25 further [1] 79:16 future [2] 72:22 136:21 G gallery [4] 16:14,16,19,24 Gas [1] 19:21 gather [1] 74:3 gave [6] 22:1 97:25 132:19 134:19,20 143:14 gay [36] 7:24 8:1 30:9 32: 25 33:18 40:20 45:8 49:22 51:22 58:15.20 76:7.15.17. 25 77:5 95:10.21 98:24 100:2.5.15.16.17.23 101:8. 12.14.15 106:4 114:24 122: 24 **133**:6,10 **147**:23 **148**:3 gays [1] 124:18 gender [4] 20:11 69:16 83: 19 **119**:9 gender-differentiated [1] General [13] 1:20,22 61:18 **72:**8 **73:**6 **124:**23 **125:**2 126:11 132:9.13.19 135:12 139.14 generality [2] 22:9 136:10 generally [10] 10:21 35:20 81:4 88:3 91:9 109:2 124: 22 **129**:8 **131**:9 **132**:16 gets [1] 90:2 getting [7] 15:9 23:4 38:9 87:11 100:12 108:13 114: qhostwriter [1] 12:25 Ginsburg [1] 49:3 give [25] 6:4 7:20,21 18:22 26:5 33:18 48:10 55:16 79: 1 81:22 98:13 102:7 111:3 131:4.13 132:17.18 137:8 146:12 148:14 150:14 152: 5,5,8 **153:**16 given [4] 81:25 85:8 139:5 **144:**18 gives [1] 131:6 giving [2] 105:5 134:21 gladly [1] 26:23 God [10] 12:3 49:5 76:22

78:3 105:13 106:5 116:24

118:5 132:11 133:13

golf [1] 69:15

goods [2] 120:9,10 GORSUCH [92] 20:25 21:3, 6,9,11,14 41:10,11 42:13 **43:**1,4 **51:**16 **62:**5,7 **84:**9, 10,13,15,19,21 85:11,22 **86:**3,9 **87:**3,6,16 **88:**2,13, 16,23 89:2,5,13,19,21 90:3, 10,24 91:3,10,13,25 92:5, 15,18,22 93:6,11,15,18,21, 22 97:11.13 117:15.23 118: 15.18 **119:**5.12.18.22 **120:** 2.7.14.19 135:16 138:18. 19,23 139:4,7,16,22 140:1, 7,9,13,19 141:1,5,9,13 142: 1,7,15,22,25 **143**:7,16 **152**: 13 Gorsuch's [1] 24:25 gosh [1] 39:7 qot [5] 19:5 23:5 69:10 141: 10 143:16 aotten [1] 44:10 government [10] 4:10,21 9: 19 22:17 50:17 149:19 151:11.13 153:1 154:1 government's [1] 121:15 government-compelled 113.19 Grandma [2] 52:13 53:11 grandmother [1] 52:9 grandmother's [1] 52:7 Granting [1] 58:23 graphic [2] 30:17 49:15 graphics [10] 3:13 7:1 8:13 10:11 20 37:15 45:5 47:9 48:18 123:11 great [4] 39:7 100:8 139:18 147:23 greater [1] 69:9 groom [1] 48:25 grooms [1] 17:3 ground [2] 47:7 133:12 grounds [2] 42:16 104:10 group [3] 100:15 101:13 115.9 guess [12] 7:9 21:19 36:14 101:9 104:5 105:14 114: 15 133:19 134:15 138:4 139:12 142:6 quidance [3] 42:9 131:6 **153**:16

Н

guys [2] 9:15 39:20

guy [1] 40:9

hairstylists (1) 43:11 Hamilton (4) 56:10,12 57: 12 63:6 hand (1) 61:23 handle (1) 132:1 handled (1) 41:13 handmade (1) 151:23 hang (1) 56:21 happen (1) 6:6 happens (1) 137:8

freelance [7] 54:2.4 86:12.

7 132:20 137:18 153:25

freedom [1] 148:19

18 87:1.22 92:9

154:3

happy [4] 19:4 88:3 103:9 **127:**18 hard [7] 47:5 70:23 79:5 87: 11 **99**:8 **105**:6 **131**:4 harder [3] 76:16 133:19 **136**:13 hardest [1] 103:5 harken [1] 27:22 Harry [4] 9:14 11:8,9,13 head [1] 122:19 hear [4] 3:3 11:11 43:18 52: heard [7] 25:25 63:24 71:4. 6 93:2 122:4 135:23 heart [1] 21:18 heavily [1] 64:11 held [11] 59:7 60:10 96:8 103:5 105:1 111:11.19 **144**:4,17,22 **152**:24 Helen's [2] 52:13 53:11 help [4] 64:24 85:18 104:6 113:13 helps [1] 25:24 Henry [2] 47:19 48:7 Herald [2] 19:21 150:3 heritage [1] 52:12 heterosexual [15] 17:19 **18:**6,10,23 **20:**2 **35:**6.15 36:3 42:18,19 49:21 58:22 99:2 119:23 120:3 highlight [1] 117:11 highly [2] 14:2 48:20 Hindus [2] 128:9.11 hire [4] 50:24 51:6 105:18. 23 hiring [1] 56:14 Hispanic [1] 27:25 historical [2] 61:14 87:8 historically [2] 69:14 104: history [8] 5:18 59:24 60:9, 22 61:16,23 71:5 83:25 hold [4] 20:23 29:25 129: 18 **142**:10 Holder [1] 136:15 holding [4] 64:23 107:17, 19 147:17 holds [2] 20:18 131:9 holiday [1] 26:7 home [1] 76:21 honest [1] 81:8 honestly [1] 117:7 Honor 5 13:22 66:1 80:25 97:23 108:3 honorable [5] 29:25 80:16. 22 81:19 152:24 honors [1] 4:8 hope [2] 76:1 134:20 host [2] 36:12 123:8 hosts [1] 31:25 hotel [4] 6:16 39:9 60:15 **62**:19 hotels [3] 7:22 10:12 37:18 hour [1] 141:10

hours [1] 138:20 house [6] 94:9,16,21 95:12, 19 22 houses [2] 43:17 44:2 however [2] 100:12 130:2 Humanitarian [1] 136:15 Hurley [27] 3:19 10:18 13: 22 19:19 32:4.19 33:22 41: 25 **55**:1.4 **96**:20 **103**:4.5.8. 11.14.20 **108**:4 **114**:14.17. 17,21 115:6,13 134:12 150: including 6 28:5 111:9, 6.9 hypo [2] 52:2 53:9 hypothetical [39] 6:5,5,10 8:3 14:23 15:6 18:5 20:7 **25**:24 **28**:21 **37**:10,12 **40**: 23 48:14 54:21 56:9 57:8 67:1 78:7 81:23 88:24 89: 7 95:10 98:13 99:9 11 101: 22 102:21 105:14 120:22. 25 124:7 132:11 136:25 **137**:1 **141**:16.20 **145**:3 146:18 hypotheticals [18] 15:1 63: 4 **70**:18 **72**:11 **77**:21 **94**:19 100:12 134:16,18,20 137:4, 9 138:7 143:23,23 144:6,8,

idea [3] 77:15 82:1 152:4 identical [8] 11:7 22:21 31: 15 38:7 51:21 58:21 65:10 **97:**18 identity [1] 98:11 ideological [2] 6:21 144: ideology [9] 9:3,4,6,13 50: 15 **79**:22.25 **80**:6 **130**:18 imagine [3] 5:16 78:10 126:

24

impact [2] 96:7.8 impermissible [2] 129:23 139:8 implicate [2] 61:5 104:13 **implicates** [1] **77**:10

implication [1] 121:1 implications [1] 104:24 implicit [7] 11:15 51:17 **107**:6 **148**:4.12.22 **149**:4 implicitly [4] 51:23 147:13 148:6 149:2

importance [1] 108:4 important [6] 27:13 36:20 46:20 50:8 53:25 137:16 importantly [1] 103:14 imposed [2] 140:23 153:17

imposing [4] 127:21 131: 11 134:9,11 impossible [1] 14:7

imprimatur [2] 81:11,13 inappropriate [1] 103:13 inauguration [1] 50:11 incidental [16] 58:7 65:5

83:13 96:7.8 110:6 114:19 **115**:2,10 **126**:7 **134**:9 **140**: 23 141:7 145:8 149:5 150: inclination [1] 133:23

include [5] 4:23 42:16.17 115:8 130:15 included [1] 127:8 includes [3] 66:22 148:16 153:11

15.17 **150:**6 **153:**21 inclusion [1] 127:22 income [1] 151:22 inconsistent [5] 18:21 **109:**16 **121:**11 **122:**9,13

indication [1] 35:4 indirectly [1] 61:9 individual [5] 62:22 86:14 90:14 91:13 110:18 individualized [3] 62:15 63:15 131:7

individuals [3] 41:4 55:24 56:24 inextricably [5] 124:8,15,

20,24 125:16 inherently [1] 21:21 inimical [1] 86:21 initial [2] 46:19 53:1 injunction [2] 66:13 135:

inside [1] 33:12 insists [1] 3:16 inspired [2] 18:1,2 instance [5] 34:11 35:24 **56**:4 **126**:22 **131**:2 instances [1] 104:10 instead [3] 49:15 110:5

115:6 institution [1] 86:20 integration [2] 33:14 104:

inter [1] 143:3 interact [1] 26:14 interest [7] 30:20 83:12,16 **121**:15 **129**:3.20 **130**:21 interested [4] 60:17 61:7 94:1 101:14 interestina [1] 96:14

intermarriage [1] 72:21 interpretation [1] 68:22 interpreted [1] 151:18 interracial [10] 13:9 14:5 **30**:12,16 **59**:11 **80**:19 **102**: 1 104:9 143:2,3

interreligious [1] 73:5 interrogation [1] 81:2 intersection [1] 60:17 intertwined [5] 124:8.16.

20 25 125:16 intrigued [1] 86:10 intro [1] 99:11 introduces [1] 99:12

intruding [1] 150:23

inverse [2] 141:16,19 investigation [1] 4:25 invidious [1] 80:4 invitation [5] 12:14,17 16:

12 28:17 21 invitations [1] 39:13 invite [1] 123:8 invited [1] 116:5 inviting [1] 12:22 invocation [1] 36:5 invocations [1] 105:1 involve [2] 144:9.20 involved [3] 45:3 64:16 **105**:9

involves [5] 45:11 46:1 96: 18,23,24 ironic [1] 152:7

irrelevant [2] 18:10 20:12 isn't [21] 8:6 14:18 27:8 28: 25 29:9 33:15 34:11 39:7 40:13 43:2 45:19 50:21 51: 4 54:21 70:16 79:12 97:14 **105**:15 **122**:5 **127**:24 **148**: 8

issue [11] 3:20 44:15 54:20. 22 62:4 80:23 103:15 130: 8.23 149:20 150:11 issues [2] 32:20 132:21 items [1] 58:14

iteration [1] 57:8 itself [10] 27:11 40:25 59: 15 **65**:12 **71**:22 **96**:11 **108**:

4 131:9 150:13,21

Jack [4] 22:2 123:17 142: 13 153:18

JACKSON [38] 11:4.18 17: 13 **25**:21.23 **27**:15 **28**:10. 18.20 **30**:25 **50**:20.21 **53**:3 **54**:6.12.15 **55**:4 **56**:6.16 57:13 70:16 79:12 103:23. 24 **104**:19,22 **105**:10 **106**:

22 **107**:15 **108**:14 **120**:20, 24 121:18 122:16 136:24 147:7,8 149:7 Jackson's [1] 75:1

Jdate [1] 74:2 Jesus [3] 116:17,19,19 iewelers [2] 43:12.25 jewelry [2] 31:1,2

Jewish [13] 72:12.13.14.17. 18 **73**:1.2.10 **74**:1.1.3.9.10 Jews [5] 58:17 72:21 73:11.

12 **125**:14 iob [1] 114:10 join [1] 28:21 Joint [1] 135:12 Jones [1] 104:17 Josh [1] 72:12

Judaism [2] 72:22 128:8 iurisdictions [3] 4:13 50: 14.15

jurisprudence [1] 138:8

Justice [453] 1:23 3:3,9 5:3, 24 **6**:2,4 **7**:16 **8**:8,10 **9**:2, 11,22,24 11:4,6,18 12:2,5, 6,16 **13**:5,6,17,19 **14**:6,9, 13,21 15:3,6,20 16:3,5,9, 13,18 **17:**13,15,18,20 **18:** 20 19:14,24 20:10,24,25

21:2,3,5,6,7,8,8,9,11,13,14 22:18,20,22 23:9,16,24 24: 4,8,10,13,21,24,25 25:3,19, 21.22.23 27:15 28:10.12. 18.20 29:5.16.17.18.19 30: 7,22,25 31:1,14,23 32:2,6, 21 33:8,17 34:1,12,16,22 **35**:2,13,18 **36**:1,14 **37**:1,3, 4,5,6,7,9,24 38:4,19 39:4 **40**:4,7,18 **41**:8,9,9,11 **42**: 13,14 **43:**1,4,5,5,7 **45:**6,24 **46**:6,10 **47**:1,2,2,4,5 **48**:3, 4 49:3,14 50:18,19,19,21 **51:**1.16 **53:**3 **54:**6.12.15 **55**:4 **56**:6,16 **57**:13,16,21 **59:**22 **60:**6.8.13 **61:**1.15 62:5.6.7.8.11 63:8.20 64:9 **65:**1,19 **66:**4,6,18,25 **67:**1, 8,13,15 68:3,18,20 69:5,25 **70**:16,18 **71**:10 **72**:7,8,9 **73:**9,25 **74:**4,6,7,13,24,24 **75:**1,11,15,19,21,22,24,25 **76**:12,15 **77**:14 **78**:9 **79**:12, 12,13,14,16,17,18 80:8,14, 15,24 81:7,17,18,22 82:18, 24 83:5,22,22,24 84:8,8,9, 10,13,15,18,21 85:11,22 **86:**3.9 **87:**3.6.16 **88:**2.13. 16,23 89:2,5,19,21 90:3,10, 24 91:3,10,13,25 92:5,15, 18,22 93:6,11,15,18,21,22, 24,24 **94**:1,25 **95**:4,14,17, 25 **96**:12 **97**:2,6,7,7,9,11, 13,23 **98:**12 **99:**13 **100:**2, 10,23 101:4,11 102:4,14, 18,25 103:21,22,22,24 104: 19,22,23 105:10,11 106:11, 15,22 107:15 108:14,15,18, 23 109:18 110:12.21 111:1 4,12,21 **112**:8,17,19 **113**: 11 **114**:6,7 **115**:23,24 **117**: 2.4.15.19.23.24.25 **118:**2. 10,15,16,18,20 **119:**5,12, 18,22 **120:**2,7,14,19,20,24 **121:**18 **122:**15,23 **123:**22, 23 124:1 125:9,19,20,20, 22,23 126:6,10,17,25 127: 6,20,24 **128:**1,14,20,24 **129:**5,21 **130:**11,14,18,24 131:16,24 132:3,4,4,6,7 133:6,13 134:13 135:9,16, 16 **136**:23,24 **137**:7 **138**:4, 16,17,17,19,23 139:4,7,16, 22 140:1.7.9.13.19 141:1.5. 9.13.15 142:1.7.15.22.25

143:7,16,18,18,20 **145**:12,

18,21 146:1,5,8,12 147:4,5,

5,7,8,10 149:7,8,13 150:10 **152**:12 **154**:5 justify [1] 129:3 juxtaposed [1] 29:13

K

KAGAN [63] 5:24 6:2,4 7: 16 **8**:8,10 **9**:2,11,22,24 **13**: 7 14:6,13 15:3 20:24 21:2, 5,7,13 28:12 29:5,16,18 37: 6,7,24 **38:**4,19 **39:**4 **40:**4, 18 41:8 47:5 48:4 72:8 74: 4.7 **75**:11.19.22.25 **76**:12. 15 77:14 78:9 79:13 84:8 106:15 112:8.17.19 114:6 **115:**23 **132:**6.7 **133:**6.13 **134**:13 **135**:9.16 **136**:23 137:7 138:16 Kagan's [3] 11:6 67:1 105: Kavanaugh [27] 43:6,7 45: 6,24 46:6,10 47:1 93:25 94:1,25 95:4,14,17,25 96: 12 97:2,6 143:19,20 145: 12,18,21 146:1,5,8 147:4, Kavanaugh's [1] 51:1 keep [2] 16:25 44:19 Kennedy [4] 80:15.24 81:7. key [1] 96:20 killers [1] 137:5 kind [23] 8:24 14:12 51:1, 14 **52**:10 **67**:9 **76**:4,19 **77**: 7,15,22,24 78:3 80:2,2 96: 8 98:16 104:1 107:22 123: 12 127:24 137:1 142:19 kinds [7] 17:9 33:7 49:24 94:17 104:14.24 121:24 Klan [3] 75:6.8.16 Klux [4] 75:6.8.12.16 knowina [1] 55:12 knowledge [1] 88:21 knowledges [1] 88:22 known [1] 64:7 knows [1] 74:14 KRISTEN [5] 1:18 2:3,13 3:

7 149:11

Ku [4] 75:6,8,12,16

label [2] 4:10 36:17 landscapers [1] 43:11 lap [2] 27:21 28:1 last [6] 4:15 21:15 49:17 **131**:16.17 **136**:23 late [2] 19:2 147:11 Laughter [10] 21:10 34:25 74:5,12 84:14,17,20 137:6 139:6,25 law [68] 3:24,25 8:2 20:19 **24**:5 **34**:18 **41**:23 **54**:1,5 **57:**24 **58:**2,5 **59:**18 **60:**18, 20 61:11 65:7 67:12 71:8,

9 80:21 81:10 85:18 87:1, 12 93:8,17 95:7 96:5,9 99: 7 103:10 109:2,19,20,25 **110**:8,22 **111**:7,18,19 **112**: 14,23 113:7,11,21 114:9 **115**:2,6,7 **118**:14 **119**:3 127:3 129:8 131:2,15 134: 6.7 **136**:15 **144**:25 **145**:1. 13 147:1 148:25 151:1.24 152:11 153:8 law-abiding [1] 153:20 Lawrence [1] 124:16 laws [26] 32:18 42:10 55:22 **59:**25 **60:**3,10,23,25 **61:**8, 17,18 **75**:10 **81**:4 **120**:13 **121**:9 **124**:21,22 **125**:3 **127:**5 **128:**4,11,13 **130:**2 131:11 146:14 153:10 laver [1] 99:12 lead [3] 94:4,6 138:11 leaders [1] 122:20 leads [2] 109:8 139:20 leagues [1] 123:3 least [8] 4:16 43:15.21 46:1. 12 63:17 127:8 129:2 leave [2] 16:9 27:16 legal [4] 43:9 44:5 50:6 150:17 legally [2] 138:25 139:19 lending [1] 40:6 lesbian [5] 25:13 30:17 45: 8 114:24 143:25 lesbians [1] 124:19 less [3] 8:16 72:4 131:7 level [5] 22:8 64:3 83:10 94: 22 136:9 levels [1] 145:25 LGBT [4] 20:20 33:5 34:21 41:6 license [1] 58:23 licensing [2] 49:23 50:2 Life [7] 55:9,11,17,23 57:5 **94**:12 **121**:22 light [3] 80:14 97:10 138: likely [7] 72:4 79:25 101:2 102:22 128:8 131:7 146:3 Lillian [1] 12:12 Lilly [11] 12:9.12.12.13.19. 22 17:2 47:19 48:6 116:4, Lilly's [1] 116:14 limit 5 50:16 83:3 128:14 129:23 153:16 limitation [3] 35:4 82:19 **131**:12 limitations [1] 87:12 limited [4] 33:19 69:15 82: 20 136:1 limiting [1] 13:6

limits [1] 129:1

Lin-Manuel [1] 63:5

line [36] 6:24.25 7:8 13:6.

11 23:25 24:1,6,7,11,22,25

25:14.19 29:13 30:8.10 35: 5 **37**:22 **45**:10.12 **52**:5 **53**: 6 **54**:24 **69**:10 **72**:10 **114**:1 **126**:5 **128**:24 **131**:14 **152**: 5,5,6,9,11,13 line-drawing [1] 42:3 lines [4] 24:20 29:1 78:11 94:18 list [2] 7:22 46:11 lists [1] 118:5 literal [1] 134:2 litigate [1] 63:22 litigation [1] 153:18 little [8] 8:14,16 21:19 41: 12 78:2,17 134:17 151:16 live [1] 50:10 LLC [2] 1:3 3:5 loathe [4] 82:12,15 83:1,18 location [2] 116:22,23 logistical [1] 150:15 logistics [1] 48:23 long [11] 60:2,22 66:14 76: 4 6 88:11 89:8 90:8 126:1 136:4 137:24 long-settled [1] 59:18 longer [1] 32:14 look [17] 6:19 10:19 17:24 28:13 45:10.13 65:14 74: 17 **80**:24 **83**:11 **85**:20 **107**: 11 **108**:5,10 **123**:11 **150**:2, looked [6] 5:8 6:9 12:7 19: 22 24:18 115:25 looking [10] 6:8 16:21 17:1 28:22 33:15 62:14 78:24 90:22 91:20 150:22 looks [6] 13:24 31:11 37: 16 **74**:18 **88**:9 **134**:12 loose [1] 151:16 Lorie [2] 3:11 18:3 lose [2] 68:8 127:10 lot [18] 21:18 39:6 43:8 44: 5 **63**:3,9,23 **68**:9 **70**:3 **74**: 14 **75**:16 **82**:6 **84**:25 **100**: 11 **117**:12 **122**:4 **129**:6 137:10 lots [2] 8:12 39:20 Love [15] 7:6.7 18:4 19:3 23:6 37:15.16 48:8 67:3 **100**:18 **101**:18 **116**:16,18, 20 153:23 loved [2] 38:8,11 loves [2] 116:18,25 Loving [2] 29:14 30:5 lower [1] 153:13 Luke [7] 12:9,20 17:2 47:

19 **48**:6 **116**:4.5 Luke's [1] 116:14 luncheonette [1] 33:20 lyrics [1] 49:19

Made [9] 7:6.7 8:5 67:3 79: 7 85:2.13 105:13 149:19

maker [2] 30:24 31:2 maker's [1] 21:16 mall [4] 26:7,25 75:2,4 man [12] 9:9 10:3 18:17 19: 12 58:12 67:4 72:13,17 **106**:9 **126**:23 **147**:21 **149**: mandate [1] 153:1 manner [3] 90:15 91:10.14 many [11] 31:12 72:20 88:4 90:4.4 98:18 99:15 104:9 115:25 137:3.4 maps [1] 148:14 march [2] 103:15.17 Mark [1] 38:7 marketplace [4] 5:20 59: 20 68:13 121:17 marriage [79] 4:8,9 5:15 8: 25 **9**:6,8 **10**:14 **12**:4,15 **13**: 9 14:5 15:24 18:17,22 19: 12 20:18,22 22:5 29:15,21 30:1.2.9 35:17.24 40:1.20. 22 **42**:25 **44**:22 **49**:5 **58**:12 66:23 67:4 77:20.23 78:14. 25 **80**:17,18,19 **90**:17 **94**: 13,15 98:18,25 99:1,9,14 100:5,20,20 101:15,16,20 **104**:12 **106**:9 **112**:15 **116**: 2,24 117:6 123:7 124:5,13 **125**:18 **126**:23 **138**:6 **142**: 4 143:4 144:2 147:3,20,23 **149**:16,16,17 **152**:23 **153**: marriages [11] 36:3 42:18 **102**:2 **104**:9 **124**:18 **126**: 18 **127**:14.17 **133**:6.11 **135**: married [11] 13:10 15:9 19: 1 22:24 23:5.10.12 38:9 **72**:14.18 **108**:13 marrying [1] 19:6 Mary [4] 12:13,23 37:14 38: Mary's [1] 38:8 massive [1] 152:13 Masterpiece [8] 22:3 71:7 **81**:2 **96**:15 **120**:7 **121**:12 124:16 143:14 matter [14] 1:13 19:11 20:8. 13 36:11 66:10 68:5 82:24 92:7 127:3 131:3,4 135:21 **151**:6 matters [7] 19:17 20:14 23: 13 **52**:3 **132**:10 **134**:4,25 McCrary [1] 137:12 meal [1] 34:2 meals [1] 34:4 mean [30] 4:17 8:10.11 10: 1 **11**:6 **27**:16.16 **37**:24 **38**: 20 39:5,11,16,19 40:4 47:7 **48**:14 **67**:15 **69**:6.6 **74**:14 75:18 101:5.5 103:3 104:

17 122:6 128:21 135:19

138:5 146:9

meaning [9] 12:18 29:6 46: 9 49:2,5,15 57:5 120:1 **151**:21 meaningful [1] 50:25 meanings [2] 38:18,22 means [6] 49:6,7 70:1,14 109:9 122:1 media [1] 153:13 meetings [1] 111:8 meets [1] 78:12 member [3] 69:18 82:2 90: membership [1] 69:16 mention [1] 74:8 mentioned [1] 109:18 mentioning [1] 8:3 menu [3] 33:19,19 116:22 message [100] 3:14,22,24 5:12,13 10:17,24,25 11:3,4, 12,15,24 12:7,11,13,23,25 17:25 18:19 19:10.15.23 22:16.21 23:3 24:19 25:9. 16 28:25 29:4.9 30:19 31: 8.19.20.22 33:1.13.16.24 36:21.23 37:22 42:23.24 **45**:19 **46**:23 **51**:17,19 **53**:7, 8,11,21 54:25 56:2,4,5,9 57:11,11 62:23 68:11 92:7 96:1,7,10 100:4 102:9 108: 5,6 109:5,13 110:2 114:25 **115**:8,20,21 **121**:6 **122**:20 124:6,9 133:2 134:1 140:6, 10,14 143:8 145:7,16 146: 24 147:12 148:9,17 149:25 **150:**1.5.24 **152:**12.20 message-based [4] 32:18 41:24 141:17 149:23 messages [20] 3:12,17 4: 25 14:1 41:4.14 42:23 44: 23 45:22 50:23 51:11 54: 23 112:14 115:15,15 137: 25 138:1 144:11 149:15,15 met [3] 3:22 18:13.25 Miami [2] 19:21 150:2 Michael [1] 123:17 Michelangelo's [1] 152:1 might [18] 10:6 25:10 86:4 91:5 93:18 100:10 104:6.7 **112**:12.18 **119**:3.3 **132**:12. 21 134:22 135:20,20 142:2 Mike [8] 9:14 10:1 37:14 38: 6,7,8 47:19 48:7 military [10] 64:17 110:2 **111**:13,17 **112**:20,24 **113**: 13,15,16 114:13 military's [3] 110:24 111:2, mind [2] 86:23 150:23 mine [1] 90:6 minimize [1] 113:4 minority [1] 54:17 minute [1] 20:5 minutes [2] 5:4 60:1 Miranda [1] 63:6

missing [1] 24:25 mockups [1] 17:1 mom [1] 151:21 moment [1] 18:12 Monday [1] 1:11 money [2] 69:17 101:16 month [6] 98:24 99:23,25 100:13 18 months [1] 19:3 mooters [1] 137:11 moots [1] 137:3 moral [2] 36:24 113:8 morning [8] 3:4 7:10 67:2 84:10,12 108:25 117:18 most [10] 6:19 58:7 63:1 64: 11 80:5 102:23 109:16 144:4,16,21 mostly [1] 73:11 motorists [1] 4:22 motto [1] 4:22 move [1] 19:25 movie [2] 55:12 121:24 Ms [143] 3:6.9.23 4:4.7.24 5: 6,12,18,24 **6**:1,3 **7**:14,25 **8**: 9 9:1,4,16,23 10:15 11:17, 20 **12**:3,14,24 **13**:16,18,21 14:8,17,25 15:3,5,10,11 16: 1,4,8,11,17 17:7,15,17,23 18:15 19:8,18,24 20:6,15 22:13,19 23:8,13,19 24:3,6, 9,12,16,23 25:2,5 27:10 28: 4,16,19,24 **29**:8,24 **30**:15 31:9,21,24 32:4,10 33:3,5, 15,15,21 **34**:9,14,17,20 **35**: 1.9.17.20.21 36:8.19 37:21 **38:**3.17 **39:**1.24 **40:**12.24 **41**:20,21 **42**:21 **43**:3 **44**:13 **45**:12 **46**:3,8,17 **47**:21 **48**: 13 **49**:25 **52**:23 **53**:13 **54**: 10,13,20 55:25 56:8 57:7, 15 76:7,24,25 108:24 112: 1 113.4 115.14 117.17 118:6 133:9 134:24 135:5. 23 137:7 140:23 142:12 149:10.13.21 150:7 152:17. 22 153:7 much [11] 41:6 47:14 80:1 85:1 112:4 130:25 131:18 **134**:6.21.21 **146**:16 multifactor [1] 62:16 musical [2] 56:10.11 Muslim [1] 143:24 must [2] 84:15 137:3 myself [1] 134:16

Ν

name [3] 7:5 48:25 106:7 names [9] 6:12 11:23 15:8, 14,19 37:17 38:11 48:24 51:23 narrative [1] 18:21 narrow [2] 43:23 136:21 narrower [1] 43:22

narrowing [1] 44:20 narrowly [2] 30:20 103:2 nature [6] 33:1 62:22 77:20, 23 109:23 120:17 necessarily [4] 28:6 99:15 104:13 129:12 necessary [1] 81:10 need [10] 42:8 66:15 73:3.4. 7 **85**:20 **87**:14 **89**:24 **136**: 19 153:19 neighbor [1] 153:23 neutral [2] 81:3 107:24 never [5] 28:9 30:19 148:7, 21 153:6 new [7] 3:25 7:15 35:1 48:9 98:19 99:22 100:14 newsletter [1] 111:19 newsletters [2] 109:22 111.9 newspaper [7] 17:8 31:25 98:17,23 100:3,8 151:9 newspapers [1] 98:18 Next [9] 4:6 27:6 39:14 46: 1 74:8.9 81:6 99:25 100:1 nicely [1] 62:2 nights [1] 19:2 Nineteen [1] 50:14 noble [1] 153:23 non [1] 56:23 non-Protestants [1] 53: nondiscriminatory [1] 119.4 none [2] 24:1 45:22 nonwhite [1] 55:23 normal [1] 98:21 normally [1] 99:9 nostalgia [1] 26:10 notable [1] 106:20 notably [1] 109:17 nothing [5] 9:3,25 10:3,9 **42**:25 notion [1] 86:13 nourishment [1] 52:11 November [2] 12:9 116:4 nub [1] 146:17 number [4] 14:25 50:14 109:34 nuptials [2] 72:16,20

0

O'Brien [7] 58:9 65:5 80:12 96:9 129:4 130:5 146:15 Obergefell [6] 9:7 29:14, 19 76:9 80:15 81:7 object [5] 41:24 44:22 49: 10 80:16 115:20 objected [2] 18:19 112:23 objection [21] 18:16 22:15, 15 23:14,15,17 24:20 27: 11,17,17 28:5,11 36:6,20 45:13,18,19 54:24 57:8 104:12 113:5 objectionable [1] 113:10

objections [8] 29:20,22 42: 15,17 **45**:16 **60**:24 **104**:14 113:8 objective [1] 148:9 observation [1] 132:19 observe [1] 53:18 observer [2] 107:24 148: obviously [5] 77:25 100:8. 13 133:9 137:22 odious [2] 138:9.13 off-the-shelf [2] 32:7.8 offends [3] 90:7 91:18 92: offensive [2] 89:6 90:18 offer [10] 58:24 67:23.24 **73**:6,7,10 **87**:13,14,16 **115**: offered [5] 11:8,13 73:11 108:24 113:21 offering [3] 55:9 69:3 70:2 offers [3] 26:7 81:24 145: office [3] 19:2 76:8 114:8 often [1] 63:3 Okay [45] 6:2 9:11 16:9 28: 18 **36**:1 **37**:1,20 **38**:5 **46**: 10 **48**:3 **49**:14 **50**:5 **55**:9 67:5 68:18 69:5 72:12,16 **73:**25 **74:**15,24 **76:**10,15 83:5 86:9,9 87:5 88:16 89: 4,21 90:10 91:22,22 97:6 98:12 120:19 124:1 126: 17 129:9 130:24 131:16 140:7 143:16 147:4 148: 19 old [1] 27:23 Ollie's [2] 33:10.25 OLSON [115] 1:20 2:6 57: 18,19,21 **60:**5,8,19 **61:**13 **62**:5,24 **63**:19 **64**:25 **65**:25 66:5,8,24 67:6,13,20 68:6, 19 69:2,12 70:8 71:3,25 72:25 73:15 74:16 75:8 76: 11,14 77:9 78:9 79:24 80: 11.20 81:21 82:13.22.25 **83**:10 **84**:7,11,12,18 **85**:9, 19,24 86:5,7,22 87:5,10,21 88:8,15,17,25 89:1,4,8,16, 20,22 90:8,21 91:2,6,12,23 **92**:1,12,17,20 **93**:1,8,9,13, 16,20,23 **94:**20 **95:**3,6,16, 20 96:2 97:1,5,15 99:8,19 100:6,22,25 101:9,21 102: 11,16,20 103:7 104:16,20 105:3 106:18 108:2.17 **126:**18 **128:**6 **132:**9,13,19 135:12 Olson's [1] 127:6 once [3] 32:11 49:22 118: one [63] 5:9 6:15 7:4.6 11:8. 8 **15**:3 **16**:1 **18**:23 **21**:14

22 30:18 38:20,21 42:7 44: 21 **45**:20 **48**:6 **50**:12 **52**:5 **58**:22 **64**:10,11 **67**:4,5 **69**: 16 **75**:25 **76**:16 **77**:17 **81**: 23,23 **91**:14,21,22 **92**:24 **98**:10 **106**:9,9 **109**:3 **110**: 21 125:18 126:23,23 128:3, 9 133:20 134:19 137:11 **142**:1.2 **143**:21 **144**:2 **146**: 6,7 **147**:21,21 **149**:3,4 **153**: ones [6] 41:18 44:23 88:4 130:22 136:1 137:5 online [1] 100:17 onlooker [2] 108:5,6 only [31] 14:4 19:4 26:19 27:6,23 33:11 35:4,6,11 **52**:10,20 **55**:13 **56**:23 **58**: 11,14 70:8 80:5 98:2,25 100:5.19 103:15 106:9 **107**:23 **110**:8 **115**:16 **122**: 1 **126**:12.23 **149**:21 **150**:18 op-ed [1] 31:25 open [9] 60:10 68:25 69:6 **84**:1,3,3 **107**:9 **131**:9,25 opening [3] 37:8 102:12 **151**:25 operating [1] 61:19 operator [1] 15:8 opinion [8] 77:19,23 105: 16 **113**:22 **124**:3 **131**:5 139:19.20 opinion-based [1] 112:16 opinion-related [1] 114:5 opinions [1] 105:22 opponent [1] 49:8 oppose [3] 81:19 110:3 149:3 opposed [7] 15:24 31:20 **52**:4 **107**:14 **108**:12 **110**: 24 111.2 opposes [1] 113:6 opposing [1] 70:20 opposite [6] 38:20 48:18 96:16 100:21 111:25 127: opposite-sex [15] 4:8 49: 12 65:11.17 68:9 77:2.4 **79**:9 **99**:3,24 **101**:19 **102**:1, 6 **127**:11 **136**:4 opposition [3] 80:18,18 104.8 oral [8] 1:14 2:2,5,8 3:7 54: 2 57:19 108:19 order [2] 58:19 150:6 ordinarily [4] 43:12 46:13, 14 **105**:19 organization [5] 100:24 102:10 123:3.5.5 organizations [2] 102:23 **123**:2 organizers [1] 55:2 orientation [8] 20:11 59:3 84:6 104:2 105:9 119:9

120:5 130:8 original [1] 35:22 orthodoxy [1] 153:1 other [51] 6:16 14:1,4 19:1, 4,6,20 **26**:24 **27**:2,2 **29**:22 36:3,15 41:16 42:24 43:17 **44**:2,3,14 **45**:22 **50**:6 **54**: 23 55:21 64:10 70:20 75:4. 14 **78**:4 **79**:8 **83**:18 **88**:22 **91**:22 **104**:14.24 **109**:21.22 **110**:15.16 **112**:19 **116**:16. 18 **126**:15 **133**:17 **134**:22 140:2 141:14 144:7.13 148:19 151:8.15 others [6] 41:15 63:11 74: 21 100:13 110:10 153:24 otherwise [8] 9:20 13:25 **50**:5 **51**:22 **54**:22 **55**:3,3 98:14 ourselves [1] 153:25 out [40] 11:23 24 25:25 28: 12 45:16 49:20 50:9 56:21 57:2 58:8 61:17 62:2,3 68: 14 **69**:11 **70**:24 **71**:22 **73**: 13 **81**:5 **85**:18 **103**:1 **105**: 16 112:18 114:11 122:11 **129**:16,19 **130**:9 **131**:9,21 **133**:7 **134**:19,22 **135**:19,21 136:14 137:23 143:9,11 **144**·18 outcome [2] 139:15 142: outfit [3] 75:7.12 82:5 outfits [2] 75:9.17 outside [2] 126:10 129:12 over [6] 60:22 68:15 87:9 93:3.3 152:18 overlap [2] 56:11 57:10 overlapping [1] 56:3 overrule [1] 150:9 own [11] 7:20 26:9 27:18 **50**:23 **51**:25 **105**:22 **107**:4. 25 111:18 118:11 148:20 owner [1] 59:9 owner's [1] 59:15

Р

p.m [1] 154:8 Pacific [1] 19:20 package [1] 55:23 PAGE [27] 2:2 12:8 15:23 16:6.7.19.21.23 18:1.2.9 **31**:16.21 **43**:10 **46**:12 **76**: 22 91:16 116:3 117:5 118: 4,21,24 123:12,15 135:11 143:22 151:19 pages [8] 15:21 16:8 31:19 46:20 111:5 114:21 118:3 143.14 paid [3] 53:2 101:4,5 pain [1] 4:25 painting [1] 153:12 palettes [1] 17:25 parade [9] 32:5 55:2 103:4,

10.15.16.17 114:23 115:8 parades [1] 4:23 paragraph [1] 106:25 paragraphs [1] 85:3 park [1] 42:5 part [16] 18:24 20:7 23:2 61: 2 70:16 77:10 87:11 105: 15 **107**:16 **118**:7 **123**:1 127:7 134:14 135:19 136: 17 18 partake [1] 52:20 parted [1] 132:9 participating [1] 40:5 particular [17] 12:7 14:15 **32**:23 **35**:21 **52**:6 **55**:15 **65**: 23 91:18 109:4.11 111:14 **124**:24,25 **137**:14,20 **150**:7 153:19 particularly [3] 6:20,21,22 parties [3] 5:11 43:9 46:19 party [1] 33:23 pass [1] 129:4 past [5] 26:10 28:8 47:12 **93:**3 **151**:18 Pat [2] 10:1,2 pays [1] 51:10 peculiar [1] 103:12 people [60] 3:13 7:19 8:19 **13**:8,9,10,15 **15**:9 **19**:1 **22**: 9,24 23:4,6,11,12 26:14 29: 22,25 31:6,7 45:8,22 49:18 **51**:10 **52**:11,20 **57**:3,6 **60**: 24 **61**:23 **63**:12 **68**:16 **70**: 15 **74:**3 **78:**12.13 **80:**16.22 81:14 82:1 83:18 86:12 96: 4 **99:**25 **101:**13 **103:**17.18 105:23 109:11.13 111:13 **114**:23 **119**:7 **122**:1.22 140:25 141:22 147:2 148: 3 153:20 people's [1] 53:4 percent [1] 127:16 perceptions [1] 151:6 perfectly [1] 133:15 perform [2] 50:10,12 performs [1] 120:17 perhaps [2] 46:5 107:18 period [2] 66:3 95:24 permissible [4] 110:6 127: 1.3 139:10 permission [1] 65:15 permitting [1] 92:4 perplexed [1] 103:25 person [25] 10:16 25:3 26: 2 30:12,16 32:23,23 34:5,6 **40**:12 **51**:18 **53**:17 **74**:1.9 78:3.4.5 79:7 86:21 88:14 89:25 106:11 126:2 132: 25 146:23 personal [3] 13:13 22:25 31:17 personalized [1] 85:4 perspective [1] 85:7 persuade [1] 91:4

Pet [1] 135:8 petition [2] 15:22 16:7 Petitioner [1] 84:2 Petitioners [8] 1:4.19 2:4. 14 **3**:8 **121**:1 **137**:22 **149**: Petitioners' [1] 122:16 Phillips [2] 93:6 153:18 philosophical [2] 30:3 98: 14 philosophy [2] 107:4,5 phone [1] 82:8 photo [8] 16:14,16,19,24 28:22,25 54:17 122:6 photograph [11] 27:1,11, 12 **28**:6 **29**:10 **45**:18 **74**:2, 10 120:21,25 121:19 photographed [1] 26:20 photographer [15] 25:7 **30:**25 **31:**2 **54:**8,8,16 **55:**7 **74**:1.10.19.20 **81**:15 **121**: 23 122:17 18 photographers [1] 59:1 photographs [1] 27:25 photography [7] 26:5,6 54: 9.11.11 **56:**21 **153:**12 photos [2] 57:4,4 pick [3] 66:25 99:16,17 picking [2] 94:2 99:21 picks [1] 98:21 picture [8] 6:13 9:14 34:3 **37**:18 **75**:3.5 **79**:22 **122**:2 pictures [9] 10:21 31:5.6 47:17 48:17 74:21 81:16 **116**:11 **122**:12 place [6] 29:13 51:2 113:1 **116**:6 **148**:1 **151**:19 places [2] 6:14 138:12 placing [1] 63:16 plaintiff [3] 119:7 120:17 142.17 planner [1] 143:5 plate [1] 34:3 play [3] 48:12 63:6 132:21 played [3] 49:20,21,24 playing [1] 151:16 please [8] 3:10 16:5 21:6 **22**:18 **28**:14 **57**:22 **108**:23 **118**:18 pledge [1] 4:23 plug [1] 48:11 plug-and-play [5] 8:4 15: 13 **47**:13,15 **152**:15 plumbers [1] 43:11 point [18] 11:6 13:2 21:16, 17,21,22 50:8 53:14 61:10, 11 **63**:14 **65**:8.20 **68**:7 **106**: 12 113:7 136:25 138:4 pointed [2] 28:12 93:4 points [1] 105:13 policies [3] 110:25 111:2 policy [4] 26:19 81:10 112:

23 151:3

political [9] 4:12 50:15 79: 22,25 80:6 130:9,12,15 **152**:9 popped [1] 22:1 portion [1] 128:18 pose [1] 107:9 posit [2] 144:7,24 posited [1] 145:3 position [8] 46:2 47:11 62: 21 68:23 94:3 12 14 96:15 positions [1] 94:10 possess [1] 43:20 possibility [1] 136:20 possible [2] 57:5 77:14 possibly [1] 151:6 post [3] 5:21 113:18 135:6 posters [1] 65:3 potential [2] 64:4 68:9 potentially [1] 71:21 power [1] 152:22 powerful [1] 63:25 PR [1] 145:15 practical [1] 68:5 practice [3] 70:14 93:1,2 prayer [1] 65:14 pre-enforcement [5] 5:7, 10 58:19 136:11,18 pre-made [1] 152:14 precedent [2] 4:1 96:21 precise [1] 131:4 precisely [3] 26:17 28:16 94:22 preference [1] 56:13 prefers [1] 41:15 premise [1] 128:25 premises [1] 30:4 preparing [1] 6:8 present [1] 77:12 presented [4] 14:19 62:25 69:13 70:19 presents [2] 112:10 136:9 preserved [1] 27:4 press [10] 4:14 13:1 86:15. 17,18 87:17,19,24 90:4 92: pressing [1] 113:21 pressure [1] 137:11 presumably [1] 75:11 pretense [1] 131:12 pretextual [1] 45:16 pretty [1] 87:7 prevail [2] 45:25 146:9 pride [3] 98:24 100:2,17 principle [2] 121:5 153:23 principles [5] 43:9 44:6 138:10.11.14 print [4] 30:23 39:15 125:4 141:21 priors [1] 22:10 private [2] 55:5 137:21 Prize [1] 25:5 pro [3] **53:**2 **94:**10.12 pro-abortion [1] 49:8

problem [14] 11:19 22:9 **44**:18 **70**:17 **72**:16.20 **76**: 25 **100**:11 **105**:15 **106**:16 109:15 129:9 131:15 148: 22 procedure [1] 77:13 process [3] 72:3 93:10.16 product [14] 26:8 29:9 45: 15 **47**:18 **52**:21 **55**:15 **64**:7 89:11 12 14 92:3 109:3 148:17.20 products [6] 52:5.12 56:22 103:19 128:7 147:19 profess [1] 84:25 Professors [1] 96:13 profile [2] 74:2.11 program [4] 93:7,12,14,19 programming [1] 47:16 progress [1] 106:19 prohibiting [1] 127:21 prohibition [3] 82:19 126: 11 130:21 prohibits [1] 79:20 Project [1] 136:15 projects [1] 42:24 promise [1] 9:7 promises [1] 152:25 promote [4] 98:15,25 99:4 143:25 promoting [1] 101:14 propagating [1] 22:25 proper [1] 94:7 properly [2] 117:13 120:12 proponent [1] 49:8 proposed [1] 12:8 protect [6] 9:7 29:12 45:7. 9 92:22 148:5 protected [24] 10:22 13:25 **17**:12 **22**:16.21 **24**:2 **28**:7 36:25 47:20,21 70:10 75:9 **82**:16 **83**:1 **92**:24 **99**:6,21 **101**:24 **115**:9,19 **142**:10,13 152:10 11 protecting [1] 83:18 protection [4] 36:10 130:5 149:23 152:3 protections [2] 32:18 41: 24 protects [5] 20:20 36:6 59: 18 107:21 147:18 Protestant [1] 52:13 provide [37] 14:11 15:12 **36**:2 **38**:24 **41**:24 **42**:8 **52**: 10 57:25 65:18,22 66:2,15 **70:**5 **78:**22,22 **88:**10 **91:**8, 9,14 95:23 97:17,21 98:1,9 **104**:2 **109**:21 **110**:1,9 **114**: 3 119:4,16,23 135:6 136:1, 3 5 147:19 provided [5] 14:25 36:9 65: 11 147:13 152:25 provider [3] 64:6.6 109:9

provides [8] 13:22 15:12

40:9 **57**:12 **68**:24 **123**:10

128:17 149:24 providing [10] 7:17 40:10, 12,13 44:20 51:9 64:17 65: 22 114:2 132:25 Provisions [1] 52:13 public [107] 3:15 13:23 17: 14 24:4,17 32:17 34:18 41: 23 42:9 51:9 53:25 54:5 **55**:5.7 **57**:24 **59**:19.24 **60**: 3.9.11.17.19.23 61:8.16.19. 25 63:1.3.23.25 64:8 68:13. 25.25 69:3.6.17 70:7 71:11. 22 **72**:4 **73**:7,21 **74**:19 **75**: 10 79:20,20 84:1,4,4 87:2, 8,23 94:21 95:1,7 99:10 101:1,22 102:2,12,13,18 **103**:2,4,9 **105**:17 **109**:2 **115**:1 **118**:13,23 **120**:12 **121:**9,17 **124:**21 **125:**2 **127:**5,16 **128:**3,5,10,12,15, 18,21 **129**:7,8,13,19 **130**:2 **131:**8.10.10.15.25.25 **132:** 2 144:25 145:13 146:3 14 **151:**15.19.23 **152:**23 **153:**9 publications [1] 17:10 publicist [1] 4:13 publish [13] 18:14,15,18 **19:7 20:3 94:**10,11,13,18 **95**:10,21 **100**:16 **123**:20 publishes [1] 100:19 publishing [8] 43:17 44:1 94:9,16,21 95:12,19,22 Pulitzer [2] 25:2 5 pure [1] 42:12 purporting [1] 50:24 purports [1] 51:8 purpose [3] 39:1 41:1 65:6 purposes [2] 55:20 124:5 pursuant [3] 93:7 111:23 126:7 pursuit [1] 154:3 pushes [1] 132:24 put [19] 15:8 22:22 44:9 48: 1 **57**:1 **66**:20 **71**:17 **73**:17. 19 **78**:5 **81**:11 **82**:4 **85**:12 90:24 95:17 106:10 109: 10 122:11 132:21 puts [1] 67:17 putting [3] **15**:14,18 **42**:5 Q

question [40] 8:23 17:18 20:1 34:15 37:9 38:13 41: 13 43:1.23 44:10 62:12 64: 10,18 69:14 71:10,13 76:1, 2 78:21 79:4,11 87:11 90: 12 **96**:22,22 **97**:3 **105**:12, 25 106:22 107:9 114:16 124:2 125:25 128:25 131: 17 136:23 140:22 141:3,14 questions [18] 3:21 5:2 17: 20 37:8 39:20 42:4 47:5

probably [1] 74:22

1.4 105:6 109:7 110:11 **122**:5 **136**:13 quick [1] 52:1 quickly [1] 19:2 quite [3] 59:23 62:2 68:23 quote [1] 76:8 quotes [1] 58:11

R race [14] 13:13 14:2 23:25 26:2,3 56:14 59:4 81:20 84:5 104:3 119:8 130:7 143:1.5 races [3] 137:14.20 138:2 racist [1] 59:9 racists [1] 138:6 rack [1] 26:13 radical [1] 138:24 raise [2] 61:23 106:22 raised [4] 31:13 44:3 104:4 150:10 raising [1] 60:24 raison [1] 123:7 rally [1] 4:20 rare [1] 125:15 re-education [5] 5:1 93:7. 12.13.19 read [7] 43:15.21 97:13 114:17 117:11 119:13 132: ready [3] 5:21,21 90:13 reaffirming [1] 42:9 real [3] 68:4,7 71:1 realized [1] 19:3 really [26] 6:5 9:24 10:3,8 21:18 23:25 26:13 51:4 70: 3.23 71:1.11 74:25 110:21. 23 111:3 114:2 121:4 130: 22 133:25 134:23 144:2 147:24 148:7.8.10 reason [12] 25:7.8 36:24. 25 96:17 98:2 105:4 115: 12 137:15 138:6 139:13 reasonable [2] 30:3 53:17 reasons [4] 36:4,16 124:12 133:20 REBUTTAL [3] 2:12 149: 10,11 rec [1] 123:3 reception [1] 116:22 recipe [1] 52:16 recipes [1] 52:8 recognition [2] 107:6 125: recognize [4] 53:25 98:25 **136**:13 **153**:14 recognized [8] 9:5 65:1 72: 5 94:24 124:14 125:17 148.7 22 record [7] 61:14 63:21 70: 19 **71:**1 **107:**10.11 **152:**18 recruiter [1] 64:17 recruiters [5] 109:21 111:

13 112:21.22.24 recruiting [2] 111:22 113:9 Reed [1] 136:16 refer [1] 26:23 reference [1] 43:15 referenced [2] 113:22.23 referred [1] 135:12 referring [1] 118:10 refusal [3] 104:2 123:25 125:7 refuse [16] 9:13 14:11 31:2. 3 **58**:15 **59**:2.12.14 **70**:14 73:21.22 84:4 97:17 133: 11 147:22 149:14 refused [2] 153:14,14 refusing [5] 14:4 45:21 95: 21 124:17 139:10 regard [1] 63:12 regarded [1] 128:21 regardless [6] 73:8 75:12 119:8 120:5 142:22 146: regards [1] 147:1 registry [3] 6:18 37:18 39: regularly [1] 33:6 regulate [1] 67:25 regulated [1] 36:18 regulating [1] 61:9 regulation [8] 65:6 110:7 **114**:19 **115**:3 **126**:8 **140**: 24 145:6.9 reject [1] 138:14 rejected [1] 148:24 rejecting [1] 136:16 reiects [1] 3:18 relabeling [1] 46:24 relate [1] 17:2 related [2] 18:23 128:7 relationship [3] 18:11 20: 12 50:3 release [8] 4:14 13:1 86:15, 17.19 **87**:19 **90**:4 **92**:9 releases [3] 87:17,24 145: relief [13] 65:14 66:12 85: 21.25 90:22.25 91:1 117: 15 **135**:13.17.18 **136**:11.21 religion [13] 59:3.16 73:8.

24 78:15 81:5 83:19 84:6 89:9 104:5 124:25 130:8 133.7 religious [43] 4:11 6:22 23: 1,2 29:20,22 30:3 36:4,5,8, 10,13,16,25 42:16 52:12 **59**:7 **77**:16 **86**:15 **87**:19,24 88:6,19 89:6 90:1,7,18 91: 19 **92**:8,11,16,19,23 **104**: 10 12 14 21 **105**:1 **112**:15 113:5 118:22 142:4 152: rigorous [1] 81:2 ripe [2] 5:5.23 rely [3] 64:11 98:13 138:7 riverboat [2] 60:16 61:4 relying [1] 51:16 ROBERTS [47] 3:3 21:8 34: remember [1] 117:8

remind [1] 27:13 remove [1] 77:21 Reno [1] 54:14 repackaging [1] 46:25 repeatedly [1] 142:17 reply [2] 43:10 46:12 reprehensible [1] 28:8 represent [1] 16:12 representation [1] 94:5 reproducing [1] 26:10 Republican [3] 30:18 50: 12 125:1 Republican's [1] 4:14 request [2] 58:21 149:22 requests [1] 3:14 require [5] 32:19 57:25 85: 16 **119**:3 **145**:1 required [10] 38:24 39:18,

22 60:11 110:1.8 111:7 **114**:4 **130**:25 **150**:17 requirement [4] 63:12 80: 9 25 127:21 requirements [1] 80:7 requires [3] 87:12 90:17 **91:**15 requiring [3] 10:24 25:9 **143**:24

reservations [1] 39:10 reserve [2] 70:4,13 reserved [1] 10:13 reserving [2] 71:23 72:1 resolve [1] 42:6 resort [1] 4:15 resources [1] 99:18 respect [6] 41:14 42:17 62: 22 **65**:23 **138**:10.15 respectfully [2] 65:25 128:

respects [1] 119:10 **Respondents** [7] 1:7,21, 25 **2**:7,11 **57**:20 **108**:21 responding [1] 144:7 response [2] 17:19 146:12 responses [1] 64:25 restaurant [5] 33:12 52:4 53:9 60:16 69:19 restaurants [4] 43:12.25 44:12 51:3 restricting [1] 110:17 restriction [1] 126:12 results [1] 109:9 reverse [1] 154:4 review [2] 30:5 131:7 reviewed [2] 97:11 117:1 rightly [1] 125:17 rights [13] 43:20 45:8,10 **50**:6 **83**:14 **100**:15.16.23 101:12.14 105:2 151:25 153:24

37:1 41:9 43:5 47:2 50:19 **57**:16 **62**:6,8 **63**:8,20 **64**:9 **65**:19 **66**:4,6 **79**:14 **83**:22 84:8 93:24 97:7 103:22 108:15,18 110:12 111:1,12, 21 117:24 118:2,16,20 125: 20 132:4 138:17 143:18 147:5 149:8 150:10 154:5 room [3] 62:19 111:3 14 rooms [5] 64:17.19 109:19 **150**:15.16 rooted [1] 153:23 round [1] 100:17 routinely [2] 19:22 24:18 RSVP [2] 16:24 116:11 rule [8] 22:11,14 59:10 78: 19 **135**:9.10 **137**:7 **150**:6 rules [2] 42:8 50:2 Rumsfeld [5] 64:12 109:17 110:13.21 113:18 run [7] 98:24 99:13.24.25 **100:**1 **101:**13,16 running [3] 61:3 98:17 100: runs [3] 98:18 122:24 142: Runyon [1] 137:12

S

sale [3] 4:3,3 46:25 sales [3] 58:6 69:3 151:21 same [52] 4:7,16,17 11:10 12:24 14:20 17:14 20:18 23:22 28:24 29:21 35:3,18 38:17,21 39:17 42:1 45:9 46:14 47:22 48:17,17 49:4, 12 **52**:11 **55**:1,25 **56**:1 **62**: 18 **65**:17 **75**:12 **83**:16 **97**: 17.24 98:9 110:9 111:24 **114:**2 **121:**19 **124:**13.18 127:13 129:14.25 132:19 134:3 138:10 144:20 147: 15,25 148:7 153:24 same-sex [55] 4:9 7:12 10: 14 14:11 22:5 29:15,21 35: 24 **39:**25 **42:**25 **43:**14 **44:** 22 45:8 48:19 49:13 65:11. 16,21 66:3,15,22 67:17,19, 21 71:19 79:10 80:16,18 81:14 86:2 92:4 94:12.14 96:14 98:25 99:1 100:20 104:12 107:22 119:17.18. 20 120:10 124:4.13.17 125: 10.18 126:20 127:14.17 135:7 136:5 144:1 147:2 sang [1] 50:11 Santa [19] 26:8,11,15,20,22, 24 27:4,6,21 54:17 75:2,4, 7 **79**:19 **121**:21,23 **122**:8, 12,14 Santa's [1] 28:1 satisfies [1] 58:8 satisfy [4] 80:7.8 98:21

146:15

Save [3] 12:9.11 116:3 saw [5] 37:15 38:8 43:8 134:10 11 saying [45] 8:18 9:12 10:8 11:11 17:2 21:21 24:13,16 **27**:4 **30**:10,13,15,23 **31**:9, 10,15 32:9,22 33:10,18 34: 8,10 35:5 39:15 51:16,23 53.9 78.3 95.23 109.11 **113**:3 5 **114**:22 **115**:7 17 **120**:8 **122**:7 **126**:21 **130**: 16.19.20 **133**:16.17 **135**:5. says [57] 4:2,6 7:4,6,11 12: 9,11 16:13,14 22:14 27:6 **31**:16 **66**:13 **68**:1 **70**:2 **76**: 8,9,16,17,24,25 **77:**1,3,5 **78**:10,14 **87**:1 **90**:14 **92**:1, 8,10 **94**:9 **95**:7 **97**:24 **98**:1, 20 106:6,11,23 116:3,5 **117**:5 **122**:18 **128**:11 **131**: 6 18 132:15 133:10 135:15 16 140:24 146:19 147:17 148:2 149:14 151:17.18 scenario [2] 5:17 51:14 scene [3] 27:20 57:1 122: Scenes [8] 26:8,11,21 27:2, 2.4 55:9 121:21 schedule [1] 6:15 school [7] 4:22 81:15 111: 20 137:13,18,22,24 school's [2] 109:19 111:18 schools [13] 64:16 65:2 109:20 25 110:8 22 111:7 **112:**23 **113:**7.12.21 **148:**25 151:1 Scientology [2] 86:19 143: scope [2] 117:15 120:12 score [1] 71:2 scratch [1] 52:6 scripture [7] 4:8 9:2 10:6 20:18 37:25 38:2 39:25 scrutiny [4] 80:1 83:11 129:4 146:15 sculptor [2] 4:18 41:7 season [1] 26:7 seat [1] 62:18 second [8] 10:23 20:7 45: 12 **65**:8 **68**:7 **72**:24 **134**:20 **150**:10 see [17] 14:23 31:15 48:7 60:19,22 61:16,22 66:18 **75**:15,16 **84**:21 **85**:12 **107**: 11 **116**:1,24 **130**:23 **150**:5 seeing [1] 57:3 seek [3] 65:16 66:17 105:8 seeking [3] 79:8 112:1 135:

seeks [11] 58:16.18 59:6

23.25 149:22.22

65:13 **66**:12 **85**:21.25 **90**:

seem [3] 30:10 47:6 150:8

seemed [3] 20:3 104:1 129: seems [7] 17:22 44:24 48: 20 57:7 64:12 102:25 124: seen [2] 51:14 68:10 segregation [2] 137:15,18 select [1] 94:17 selective [4] 72:3 73:13 131:19 132:2 selectivity [12] 64:3 69:7. 11.20 **71**:23 **72**:2 **94**:23 **129:**11,15 **130:**25 **131:**6,13 self-government [1] 154: sell [39] 4:5 13:14 26:2 49: 11 **51**:22 **52**:4 **53**:10 **55**:16. 22 **56**:7.23 **58**:2,10,14,22 68:2,14,15,21 73:21,22 89: 8,12,18,20,24 **90:**8,14,15, 16 **92**:2.6.10 **120**:3.9 **121**: 25 **128**:7 **143**:4 **151**:22 selling [4] 48:15,19 50:23 51:24 sells [2] 47:17 73:18 send [9] 12:18.19.20.21 33: 16 114:25 122:20 133:25 **150**:15 sending [2] 11:12 111:8 sends [1] 33:13 sense [5] 49:9 50:25 112:6 130:1 132:8 sentence [1] 81:6 separate [2] 80:2 109:20 separately [1] 86:10 sepia [2] 26:12 27:22 serious [3] 96:21.22 97:3 serve [19] 13:12 23:6 31:3 32:23 33:11 34:5.5 43:14 **45**:21 **58**:15 **59**:14 **60**:11 70:15 84:5 109:11 124:17 **125**:5 **142**:18 **143**:2 served [1] 59:12 serves [3] 3:13 33:6 131: service [37] 14:11 15:10 24: 15 **34**:10 13 **47**:25 **53**:23 **59**:2 **64**:5 6 **65**:21 23 **67**: 23 68:24 69:8 70:14 71:20 **73**:7 **74**:3.20 **78**:23.25 **81**: 24 84:24 87:13,14 88:10, 11 92:3,13 95:23 96:3 122: 21 129:23 133:1,2 139:10 services [25] 35:5 40:7,10 **58**:1,25 **67**:23 **69**:3 **70**:3,4 74:18 78:21 98:7 104:3 109:10.21 110:1 113:20 115:18 117:17 120:9.10 **128**:18 **131**:19 **132**:25 **135**: 25 serving [12] 13:25 14:3 31: 4 33:2 54:23 63:12 67:16 **84**:4 **109**:4,13 **115**:3 **129**:

set [5] 58:8 81:1 134:18,20 146:3 sets [1] 62:2 seven [1] 116:14 several [1] 93:3 sex [9] 38:21,21 48:18 83: 19 **84**:5 **100**:21 **127**:13.14 130.7 sexist [1] 59:9 sexual [8] 20:11 59:3 84:6 104:2 105:9 119:9 120:5 130:8 sexuality [1] 19:15 shape [1] 33:22 share [1] 52:11 She's [23] 3:24 5:20.21 7: 17 **11**:16,20,21,21 **33**:22 36:21,22 37:22 39:25 49: 16 **52:**3 **135:**13,14 **141:**3 **147**:24 **148**:2.15.16 **151**:23 shelf [2] 51:8 84:24 shift [1] 153:2 shinale [1] 56:21 shockingly [1] 153:14 shoes [1] 116:13 shop [1] 30:23 shopping [1] 26:6 shots [1] 122:19 shouldn't [1] 61:24 Show [7] 15:20,21,22 16:5 **31**:18 **80**:12 **82**:9 shows [1] 60:10 side [13] 25:15 29:6 43:18 44:3 62:1 70:21 96:16 129: 6 132:22 140:2 144:7.13 **151**:16 sides [1] 61:14 sign [5] 27:5 35:11 109:10 135:6 151:23 signature [1] 57:2 significant [3] 127:10 128: 18 **149**:18 significantly [1] 110:14 silly [1] 127:25 similar [5] 3:20 8:12 65:7 112:25 149:1 similarly [1] 60:2 simply [9] 4:4 36:5,16 46: 24 53:23 64:1 71:23 110: 17 124:5 since [1] 71:7 sincere [2] 113:5,8 sincerely [1] 59:7 single [3] 42:7 81:5 86:1 sit [3] 34:1 52:14 113:13 site [9] 18:14,16 37:17 38:5, 8,8,16 39:6 40:18 sitting [3] 47:8 82:7,7 situation [9] 11:7 28:3 51: 5 **52**:24 **104**:13 **106**:13 141:16.19 147:13 situations [3] 31:12 36:12 104:15 six [3] 5:19 19:3 152:18

sleeping [1] 42:5 slide [2] 22:10,19 slipping [1] 56:17 sliver [2] 67:9 71:16 Smith [24] 3:11,23 4:4,7,24 **5**:12 **15**:11 **17**:23 **33**:5.15 34:20 41:21 76:24.25 112: 1 115:14 118:6 133:9 134: 24 135:5 140:23 149:22 150:7 153:7 Smith's [7] 5:18 35:21 76: 8 **113**:5 **142**:12 **152**:17.22 soccer [1] 151:21 sold [2] 47:22 152:2 sole [2] 66:11 99:20 solely [7] 73:23 79:7 97:18 **98**:10 **103**:19 **114**:24 **128**: Solicitor [2] 1:20.22 Solomon [1] 111:23 solve [1] 106:14 solving [1] 106:19 somebody [1] 82:9 somehow [3] 58:2 146:24 someone [16] 17:10 26:2 31:25 73:23 81:23 85:16 87:14 92:13 93:18 95:8,24 **97**:24 **114**:3 **121**:7 **125**:4 **150**:24 someplace [1] 37:15 sometimes [3] 21:20.24 song [4] 49:17,23 50:4,10 songwriter [1] 49:16 sorry [15] 5:25 8:24 15:20 21:4.12 25:22 27:16 29:18 **62:7 64:5 66:7 118:17 127:** 14 136:17 140:10 sort [21] 6:25 25:24 37:11 50:22 51:15 56:17 62:11 71:5 72:3 83:15 110:13 **112**:7 **114**:5 **120**:25 **129**: 17 131:3 134:9,11 147:9 148:3.22 sorts [3] 59:9 113:20 121: **SOTOMAYOR** [48] **12**:2 6 16 13:5.17.19 15:20 16:3.5. 9,13,18 22:18,20 23:9,16, 24 24:4,8,10,13,21,24 25:3, 19,22 30:7,22 31:1,14,23 32:2,6,21 33:8,17 34:1,12 37:5 40:8 83:23,24 115:24 **117:**3,4,19,25 **132:**5 Sotomayor's [2] 17:20 28: soulmates [1] 18:12 souls [1] 20:14

speaker's [2] 10:23 153:4 speakers [2] 123:9 144:10 speakers' [1] 62:23 speaking [11] 11:22 31:8, 16 **32**:8 **35**:20 **52**:19 **53**:13 **54:**8.16 **61:**25 **88:**3 special [2] 16:23 116:8 specialized [1] 34:4 specific [7] 28:4 65:14 71: 6 **85**:21,25 **90**:22,25 specifically [3] 101:18 113: 23 128:24 speech [185] 3:15,19,21,23 **4**:4,7,10,11 **5**:19 **8**:6 **9**:16, 25 10:4,9,17,19,21 11:2,22 **13:**2,3,20,24 **15:**11,16,16 16:2 17:11 19:13,22 20:19 **22**:6,7,14,16,21 **24**:14,18, 20,25 28:8 29:3,12 30:14 **31:**11,12,13 **32:**11,12,13, 14 **33**:23 **34**:11,18 **35**:9,25 **36:**10.12 **38:**23 **39:**11.18. 21 40:13.14.17 41:2.13 42: 4.10.12.15 **43**:13 **44**:2.14. 15,15 **45:**2,5,9,11,17 **46:**18, 25 **52**:25 **53**:1.2 **54**:11.12. 21 55:20.21 56:20.24 59:5 60:4,18,21,24 61:3,5,9,17 **62:**13 **63:**10 **64:**14,16,19, 22 **65**:2,4,12 **78**:17 **82**:20 84:23 86:14 88:18 89:14, 17 91:24 92:8,10 96:18,23. 25 97:12,14,18,21 98:3,15, 16 **105**:7 **107**:12 **108**:12 **109:**3.25 **110:**6.9.16.17.19 **111**:10.24 **112**:4.7 **114**:2. 18 **115**:10.11 **121**:5 **123**:20 **126**:1,2,4,12 **132**:22 **144**:9 **145**:5.13 **146**:2.18.19.20. 23 **149**:5 **150**:1,4,4,18,19, 19 **151:**4.8,12 **152:**1,9,10, 15.15,17 **153:**3,4,11,15 154:1 speech-based [1] 117:25 speeches [9] 81:25 82:11, 14 **88:**19,21 **144:**4,16,21 145:14 Spence [1] 108:3 spend [2] 5:4 59:25 spent [1] 59:22 spirit [1] 150:23 spirits [1] 116:22 spoke [1] 22:4 spoken [1] 41:12 square [1] 152:23 squarely [1] 148:24 stand [1] 117:8 standard [12] 6:11 8:19 37: 17 **38**:5 **39**:5 **67**:2 **76**:18 19 107:16 113:2 123:9 130.5 standardized [1] 66:21 standards [1] 98:22

standing [1] 84:16

stands [1] 123:6 start [3] 16:7 124:12 132: started [2] 54:1 114:21 starting [1] 82:6 starts [2] 113:25 130:3 state [15] 4:3 67:25 68:1 71: 8 **79**:19 **81**:11 **83**:15 **128**: 15.16 129:1.17.20 130:1 131:2 146:15 state's [1] 83:11 stated [2] 118:4 147:14 statement [14] 5:22 20:8 **46**:19 **54**:1 **77**:19.22 **78**:10 **79:**6 **105:**16 **106:**1,2,4,14 113:14 statements [4] 53:1 112: 16 113:9 114:6 **STATES** [14] 1:1,15,24 2: 10 **32**:15 **41**:16,20 **49**:4 108:20 121:3 146:10 149: 14 150:12 152:8 States' [1] 46:21 station [1] 39:15 stationer [1] 39:14 stationery [1] 39:16 status [32] 53:20 56:2 57: 11 **68**:16 **79**:7 **115**:5,17,19, 22 123:25 124:6,8,15,19 125:15 133:1,3 135:11 **139**:9 **140**:2,5,14,25 **141**: 22 142:10,13,23 143:8 146: 22.22 148:16.18 status-based [11] 66:9.16 **117**:20 **120**:11 **125**:7 **141**: 3 15 142:8 143:12 146:25 147:3 statute [12] 35:8 36:7 68: 22 70:1.22.25 83:7.8.9 92: 23 151:17,18 stay [1] 8:20 steal [1] 139:23 step [1] 55:21 Steve [2] 11:9,13 still [12] 13:1 17:11.12 29: 11 78:19 84:12 91:20 95:1 **119**:25 **132**:2 **143**:5 **146**: 25 stip [1] 119:12 stipulated [13] 5:12 14:15 **33**:4 **42**:22 **63**:2 **70**:19,21 **71**:13 **91**:17 **107**:8 **119**:14, 15 **142**:16 stipulation [2] 118:3,22 stipulations [15] 85:2,20, 23.24 86:6 97:10.12.16 **106**:20.21 **107**:1 **117**:14 **118**:8 **119**:6 **136**:2 stock [1] 47:17 stop [3] 65:20 74:25 87:25 store [4] 58:13,16 128:6,10 story [27] 15:24 16:15,15, 19,20,20,22,25 17:5,6,11 18:1,7,8,24,25 19:5 23:5,

speaker [7] 8:1 10:25 23:

sounds [1] 40:5

sparse [1] 61:14

space [2] 102:8 150:21

18,20,21 35:23 77:24,25 **78**:1 **98**:6 **101**:17 storybook [1] 18:4 straightforward [1] 61:6 stream [4] 32:12 47:25 48: 1 50:7 strong [1] 133:24 stronger [1] 134:6 strongest [2] 5:9 47:7 strongly [2] 93:20 104:25 structure [1] 149:1 struggling [1] 90:20 student [1] 123:2 students [1] 138:1 stuff [1] 91:17 subject [3] 25:6 118:13 153:22 subjective [2] 62:16 63:14 submitted [3] 72:12 154:7. subscribed [1] 118:6 substantial [1] 129:3 substitute [1] 7:5 subtly [1] 71:18 successfully [1] 42:2 sufficient [1] 148:23 sufficiently [2] 73:13 129: suggest [2] 25:25 53:4 suggested [3] 40:8 104:23 150:12 suggesting [4] 35:10 74: 13.15 **107**:18 supply [2] 69:10 70:10 support [8] 41:21 78:15 94: 10 11 12 110:3 149:2 4 supported [2] 96:14 130: 21 supporting [4] 1:24 2:11 **51**:18 **108**:21 suppose [13] 7:10 12:5 14: 9,9 **26**:4 **70**:1 **75**:18 **79**:19 81:23 128:16 131:16,17 **146**:6 supposed [1] 133:14 **SUPREME** [2] **1:**1,14 sweeping [3] 59:6 109:9 121:10 switch [1] 11:23 switching [1] 11:24 symbolic [3] 40:14 45:5 46: symbols [1] 42:12 sympathize [1] 138:15 systems [1] 90:5 Т tag [4] 6:24,25 7:8 35:4 tailor [1] 126:19

tailored [1] 30:21 tailors [3] 43:12,25 60:21 takeout [1] 33:12 talked [4] 72:25 81:7 102: 24 108:4

target [1] 57:24 targeting [1] 127:22 targets [2] 58:3,5 tax [2] 125:14,14 Taylor [1] 142:14 teach [3] 137:17,18,25 tech [1] 59:13 technology [1] 3:11 tells [1] 8:19 templates [1] 7:17 Tenth [3] 54:3 86:11.25 terms [18] 7:14 15:1 29:14 42:22 46:18 48:22 50:3.4 **52**:24,25 **53**:15 **56**:14 **63**:8, 9 70:17 92:2 149:20 151:4 test [9] 3:22 42:1 53:16 57: 9 108:25 129:4 134:2 148: 14 **150**:5 tests [2] 45:4 53:17 text [4] 10:20 48:17,23 49: 11 theme [1] 17:24 themes [1] 73:2 themselves [4] 47:20 60: 10 **102**:12 **129**:19 theories [1] 44:19 theory [7] 4:12 44:25 50:13 **92**:25 **94**:5 **121**:8 **122**:17 there's [46] 6:24 9:2,3,3,13, 14 **10**:3 **18**:1,18 **22**:15 **24**: 7,18 25:7 26:1 30:1,5 39:6 **45**:7 **50**:5,16 **51**:19 **53**:21 **56:11 57:10 63:14 69:8.11 75:**3 **77:**15.18.22 **78:**12 **80:** 12 12 96:6 97:3 105:25 107:6.9 108:8 117:5 124:3 129:9 131:18 133:2 138: 24 therefore [2] 58:3 96:20 they've [2] 42:2 151:17 thinking [3] 94:6,8 105:15 thinks [3] 128:9 140:2 141: third [6] 33:23 78:3.4 113: 22 144:2.14 Third-party [1] 151:6 THOMAS [10] 5:3 37:3 59: 22 60:6.9.13 61:1.15 79:16 **125**:21 Thomas's [1] 62:12 though [10] 18:20 20:19 40: 18 53:24 78:2,20 86:20 97: 2 **102**:9 **105**:20 thoughts [1] 26:6 thousand [1] 56:18 threat [1] 72:22 three [1] 144:6 thumbs-down [3] 79:1.2.9 typefaces [4] 7:2,18 8:13 thumbs-up [3] 79:1.3.8 thunder [1] 139:24

tied [2] 115:21 133:3

today [10] 5:21,22 19:5 42:

1 60:21 63:24 109:7.14

tinv [1] 71:16

117:8 **132**:18 together [2] 9:15 78:6 tomorrow [1] 7:10 tone [2] 26:12 27:22 took [4] 17:20 44:4 77:21 **135**:21 tool [1] 153:5 topic [1] 4:7 Tornillo [1] 150:3 total [1] 65:15 totally [1] 107:9 touch [2] 88:20.22 tougher [1] 134:22 toward [1] 42:20 towards [1] 106:19 town [3] 6:17 116:6 122:25 trade [1] 61:19 tradition [3] 59:24 60:3 61: traditional [3] 123:6 129: 17 130:7 traditionalist [1] 142:3 traditions [1] 88:20 train [2] 60:16 61:3 training [1] 93:7 transaction [1] 66:11 transcends [1] 18:11 transformed [2] 81:8.9 travel [2] 6:16 8:20 treatises [1] 61:11 trickier [1] 78:17 tried [1] 146:11 troubling [1] 138:3 true [1] 45:23 truly [1] 114:18 truth [1] 154:3 try [1] 100:3 trying [19] 26:15,17,22 27: 22 52:2.19 56:24 70:17 71: 14 99:4 105:15 122:3 134: 16 144:18 147:9 148:10,11 14 151:22 turn [11] 12:8 58:19 65:15. 21 86:1 95:8 101:19,23,25, 25 140:25 turn-down [1] 124:6 turned [2] 19:3 65:10 turning [7] 67:18,21 103: 18 **124**:4 **141**:22.23 **142**:3 turns [2] 99:1 100:21 Twenty [1] 41:20 two [17] 3:21 6:6 9:15 15:9 23:4 61:15 64:25 67:13 85: 17 90:19 91:21 92:21 108: 2 109:4 137:5,9 138:20 two-part [1] 108:25

typically [2] 50:22 100:8 U unable [1] 5:20 unacceptable [2] 126:20

uncertain [1] 92:2 unconstitutional [1] 82: undeniably [1] 3:24 Under [23] 4:12 8:2 18:8 35: 7 **36**:7 **44**:25 **50**:12 **54**:5, 14 66:1 75:9 80:11 83:10 10 87:6 92:23 99:7 105:7 106:7 121:8 129:4 151:24 **152**:11 undermining [1] 121:14 understand [29] 9:12 17:5 21:20 36:15 46:6 52:2 57: 1 **60**:13,14 **61**:6 **66**:19,19 **68**:3,20 **70**:1 **71**:12,14 **76**: 3 90:20 96:2 106:7 107:3, 5.5 **118**:7 **120**:15 **125**:24 127:2 141:20 understanding [1] 87:8 understood [2] 42:14 141: 23 unfettered [1] 151:11 union [9] 20:14 67:4 76:22 78:4 105:14 106:5 120:4 132:11 133:14 unions [3] 42:19 99:3 102: unique [1] 5:13 UNITED [11] 1:1,15,24 2:10 **46**:21 **49**:4 **108**:20 **121**:2 **149**:14 **150**:12 **152**:7 University [1] 104:17 unless [4] 5:24 128:11 149: 15 16 unlike [5] 77:24 78:1 91:24 96:19 144:8 unlikely [3] 14:3 48:20 101: unmarried [1] 73:25 unmistakable [1] 118:23 Until [1] 146:8 unusual [3] 100:7,11 101: 21

20 37:22 38:14 39:14 47:9 **54**:25 **62**:11 **67**:1 **75**:6 **82**: 6 9 91:1 94:2 109:10 130: 3 **143**:21 **151**:5 **152**:13 upcoming [2] 39:2 72:15 upend [1] 59:17 upheld [2] 110:16 149:6 upshot [1] 122:17 using 5 3:12 15:15 32:17 95:22 112:22

up [22] 7:10,23 22:1,19 24:

valid [1] 67:4 validate [1] 136:7 validly [2] 143:12 145:1 variety [1] 88:5 various [1] 70:18 vendor [1] 77:11 version [3] 116:14.15.15

versus [8] 3:5 49:4 109:17 **136**:15,16 **137**:12 **140**:14 **148**:12 video [1] 55:10 videos [3] 10:20 45:5 48: 18 view [19] 9:9 20:22 21:14. 16.17.22.22 26:9.21 27:19 90:17 109:5 115:12 122: 13 127:16 129:7 134:15 **140**:9 **141**:14 viewer [1] 107:2 viewing [2] 25:4 118:23 viewpoint [1] 140:3 views [22] 9:6 18:22 27:18 **59**:10 **80**:23 **87**:19.24 **105**: 22 112:15 123:7 124:24 **127**:12 **138**:5,9,13,15 **139**: 11 **142**:3 **146**:19 **149**:16 **152**:22.23 vile [1] 28:7 violate [7] 3:17 20:17 27: 18 39:22 144:4 16 21 violates [8] 9:10 16:2 25: 16 **36**:23 **46**:23 **58**:3 **96**:5 150:24 violating [3] 51:25 128:10, violation [1] 67:11 violent [1] 28:8 virtual [1] 151:21 Volokh [1] 96:13 vow [1] 83:14 vows [3] 81:25 82:11,14

WAGGONER [118] 1:18 2: 3.13 **3**:6.7.9 **5**:6.24 **6**:1.3 **7**: 14.25 **8**:9 **9**:1.4.16.23 **10**: 15 **11**:17.20 **12**:3.14.24 **13**: 16.18.21 **14:**8.17.25 **15:**4.5. 10 **16:**1.4.8.11.17 **17:**7.15. 17 **18**:15 **19**:8,18,24 **20**:6, 15 **22**:13,19 **23**:8,13,19 **24**: 3,6,9,12,16,23 **25:**2,5 **27:** 10 28:4,16,19,24 29:8,24 **30**:15 **31**:9,21,24 **32**:4,10 33:3,15,21 34:9,14,17 35:1, 9,17,20 36:8,19 37:21 38:3, 17 39:1,24 40:12,24 41:20 42:21 43:3 44:13 45:12 46: 3.8.17 47:21 48:13 49:25 **52:**23 **53:**13 **54:**10.13.20 55:25 56:8 57:7.15 108:24 117:17 135:23 137:8 149: 10,11,13 wait [1] 69:10 waiting [1] 82:8 wake [1] 7:23 wakes [1] 7:10 walk [1] 106:11 walks [3] 76:7.16.17 wanders [2] 129:17 146:16 wanted [6] 37:7 52:10 103:

type [3] 65:23 112:4 117:16

10:11

25 115:9 137:13 141:24 wants [16] 26:9 58:2 66:21 **68**:12 **69**:7 **89**:25 **98**:8 **100**: 16,18 **121**:23,25 **123**:17 **130**:3 **135**:14,25 **148**:5 wares [1] 68:14 Washington [3] 1:10,18, wavered [1] 20:4 way [48] **12**:24 **17**:14 **20**:18 23:22 26:20 33:9,19 35:1 37:11 38:25 44:9 45:20 47: 22 50:10 53:8,22 55:25 56: 1 62:4 64:3 69:13 80:25 81:5 96:3 105:6 109:15 112:10 114:16.16 124:23 126:19 127:4 130:20 134: 19,22 138:21 139:17 140: 16 **142**:1,8 **143**:10 **146**:24 **147:**1 **148:**6,7,12 **149:**25 152:16 ways [1] 132:9 weaker [2] 129:19 130:22 web [11] 28:11 30:23 48:16 **59**:11 **81**:14 **102**:8 **106**:6 **107**:21 **118**:4,24 **122**:24 website [137] 5:22 6:11 7:1, 3,20 **8**:4,5,19,24 **9**:1 **11:**5, 7,10,13,25 **12**:8,17,21 **13**:7, 17 **14**:10,12,20 **15**:5,7,8,13, 15,21,23 **16**:6 **17**:21,22 **20**: 16,20,21 **25**:13 **31**:15,17, 18 **32**:7,8 **34**:23 **35**:3 **40**: 16 **43**:24 **44**:7,8 **46**:16 **47**: 14 **48**:16 **49**:12 **58**:21 **65**: 10,17 **66**:3,20,21 **67**:7,16, 17,18 **68:**8 **70:**2,5 **71:**11,17, 17,21 72:14,15,19,19,23 73:1,4,16,17,18,18,19,23 **74:**8 **76:**18,19,22 **78:**5,12 **79:**3,4,8 **85:**14 **90:**16 **94:**7 **95**:18,20 **96**:19 **97**:22,25 98:9 106:6,8,10,24 107:2,4, 13,23,25 **108:**10 **112:**9,9 **116**:1 **117**:1 **118**:10,11 **119**:1,17 **120**:3 **123**:9 **125**: 4 126:18,19,20,22 127:7,8, 10 22 23 **133**:10 **141**:21 **142**:14,19 **147**:22,23 **152**: websites [33] 6:9,19 7:12, 15 **21**:15 **35**:14,14,22 **36**:2 **39:**2,12 **48:**5 **54:**13 **58:**2, 11 **73**:20 **74**:22 **84**:23 **90**: 15 **91**:9,11,14 **107**:11 **113**: 2 117:12,13 118:11,13 119: 1 **123**:1 **135**:7 **143**:3 **144**:1 wedding [58] 5:14 6:13 9: 17,18 **10**:13 **11**:16 **12**:17, 22 17:21 18:7 28:14,17 31: 18 **39**:2,3,5,9,17 **40**:6,7,10, 15,16,25 **43**:14 **44**:16 **46**:5 **48:**21 **49:**12,19,21,22 **50:**4 **58:**21 **65:**24 **66:**2,3,15 **73:**

3 81:24 82:1 91:8 107:2,7, 13,23 108:10 112:11 113:1 6 **119**:17,19,20 **120**:11 **133**: 10 143:5 148:1,4 weddings [5] 39:25 49:24 99:24 100:1 105:8 welcome [3] 5:2 59:21 110: 11 whatever [9] 10:11 38:11 **60**:1 **62**:16 **68**:1 **73**:20 **104**: 22 107:7 123:4 whatsoever [3] 69:7 107: 10 108:9 whenever [1] 109:12 where's [1] 13:11 whereas [1] 140:10 Whereupon [1] 154:8 whether [36] 4:11 5:4 10:2 11:21 17:8 19:11 23:15 24: 18,19,19 36:17,23 40:14 **42**:5.11 **45**:2.10 **47**:24 **53**: 2 54:21 56:19 60:2 61:2 71:11 75:13 77:8 84:23.23 **105**:25 **107**:11 **117**:8 **124**: 4 125:25 135:19 142:21 147:11 whims [1] 153:2 white [12] 23:12 26:19 27:5, 6,23 **31**:5 **32**:24 **55**:13 **56**: 23 75:13 99:25 143:4 who's [8] 17:4 46:15 75:6 78:5 106:16,16 132:25 146:23 whole [5] 13:2 39:6 53:6 64:21 78:5 whom [3] 13:12 86:16 88:7 wide [2] 88:5 107:9 will [48] 22:9 26:23,25 27:1 **34**:5 **46**:4 **47**:24,25 **65**:18 **66**:2 **68**:8 **70**:5,6,15 **71**:18 **74**:7,25 **82**:9 **86**:25 **90**:3,3, 14 **91**:9,13 **92**:2,6,10 **94**:18 **95**:10,12,12,23 **98**:1,9 **106**: 11,12 107:3,4 114:9 118: 23 119:16 128:24 133:9 **135**:6 **142**:14,17 **148**:3 **150**:5 William [1] 22:2 willing [4] 27:24 37:23 119: 7 133:4 win [2] 45:24 57:11 Wind [1] 49:17 window [1] 33:12 Wings [1] 49:18 wins [1] 56:4 wish [1] 77:16 within [7] **83**:6,7,8,8 **117**: 13 120-1 12 without [2] 63:12 135:1

woman [12] 9:9 10:2 18:17 19:12 58:13 67:5 72:13.18

106:9 **126**:24 **147**:21 **149**:

woman's [1] 7:5

18

women [2] 122:19.20 women-led [1] 59:13 wonderful [11] 40:20,22 **55**:8,11,17,23 **57**:4 **78**:14 **121:**22 **133:**7,11 wondering [4] 77:7 78:7 132:13 147:11 Wooley [2] 150:22 151:9 words [15] 3:12 10:20 36: 15 **38**:18 **45**:4 **49**:4.10 **79**: 8 **82**:4.4 **91**:16 **96**:22 **110**: 17 112:19 134:2 work [10] 19:1 25:10 51:20 20.21 91:4 119:7 120:16 124:22 127:5 worked [1] 24:7 workplace [1] 122:21 world [4] 57:2 68:4,7 122: worst [1] 151:5 wow [1] 40:20 writ [1] 15:22 write [23] 4:14 17:9 18:8 30: 8 82:10.14 86:14.18 87:16. 18,23,25 88:19,20,21 90:4 91:15 144:3,16,21 145:6 146:20.23 writer [12] 86:18,18 87:1,22 **88**:18 **91**:24 **92**:8,9,9 **144**: 20 145:1 146:18 writer's [2] 13:2 83:14 writers [6] 54:2,4 86:12 144:3.15 146:2 writes [3] 12:25 18:25 49: writing [4] 17:10 63:6 81: 24 145:14 written [2] 18:2 31:25 wrote [1] 80:15

1

yarmulkes [1] 125:14 Yates [1] 49:3 year [2] 6:7 100:17 years [8] 5:19 62:3,9,10 86: 24 93:3 116:14 152:18 York [3] 98:19 99:22 100: 14 yourself [1] 85:14