

Love hurts, love scars, love scams you out of thousands of dollars...



# COURTHOUSE NEWS SERVICE

## Closing Arguments

*The week in Courthouse News*

February 16, 2024

It was an expensive week for many Americans, with Valentine's Day falling smack in the middle, but the week's most notoriously hefty tab was the one handed on Friday to Donald Trump.

The former president and current GOP front-runner was [ordered to pay nearly \\$355 million in disgorgement](#) and was banned for three years from serving as an officer or director in the New York real estate business — the fallout from the Manhattan civil fraud trial that played out from last October until [closing arguments in mid-January](#).

Justice Arthur Engoron cited Trump and his co-defendants' refusal to admit wrongdoing throughout the trial as a reason for the heavy penalties. "Their complete lack of contrition and remorse borders on pathological," he wrote.

Courthouse News reporter [Erik Uebelacker](#) followed the trial from gavel to gavel, and offered some insight into the slam-dunk verdict for New York's attorney general.

--

*Closing Arguments: You covered the trial extensively and wrote about Trump's appearances and testimony. What was it like sitting in the courtroom every day? What was most memorable?*

**Erik Uebelacker: Hearing the way Donald Trump's attorneys managed to feud with not only opposing counsel, but the court, too, was an awfully memorable experience. Some of the**

**exchanges I witnessed between Justice Arthur Engoron and Trump attorneys Alina Habba and Chris Kise were so fiery that I would be shocked to see anything like it in a courtroom again.**

*CA: Trump has demonstrated a penchant for appeal. How might we expect him to push back on the judge's decision today?*

**EU: Alina Habba made her intentions to appeal clear just minutes after Engoron's decision was filed on Friday. Should she go through with that plan, it's likely that she'll try to claim bias from the judge. Trump's team has already questioned Engoron's impartiality in numerous court filings, press conferences and exchanges in the courtroom.**

*CA: Next month, Trump is due back in Manhattan to face criminal charges, just as the 2024 presidential campaign heats up. Give us a sneak peek as to what we can expect — how did his run for office play into this trial?*

**EU: We can expect to see more fireworks from Michael Cohen, considering he's at the center of this hush-money case. Cohen delivered a scorching testimony against Trump in the civil case, and will likely be called to the stand in this criminal trial as well. The Manhattan District Attorney could have Allen Weisselberg in his pocket, too, now that Weisselberg is [reportedly negotiating a perjury plea deal](#). We'll see if that results in anything, though.**

*CA: Favorite on-the-record quote from the whole trial: go.*

**EU: "Mr. Kise, please control your client." - Justice Engoron, five minutes into Trump's unplanned rant at the closing arguments in January.**

--

Stick around, we've got lots more Courthouse News ahead.

— [Nina Pullano](#)

**Here's what else happened in court this week:**



During a contentious hearing, Fulton County District Attorney Fani Willis [answered questions about a purported romantic relationship](#) between herself and the special prosecutor handling the Georgia election interference case against Donald Trump. [[Megan Butler](#)]

» The UN's highest court on Friday [urged Israel to adhere to an emergency measures order](#), specifically calling attention to the southern Gaza city of Rafah where Israel has proposed a large-scale military assault. South Africa had asked the International Court of Justice to [expand the measures order issued in January](#) but the Hague-based court said the existing order covered the current "perilous situation." [[Molly Quell](#)]

More than a million Palestinian refugees are believed to be sheltering in Rafah, which before the outbreak of war had a population of about 250,000 people. Earlier this week, [world leaders mounted support for a cease-fire](#). [[Cain Burdeau](#)]

» Aiming to block a proposed \$25 billion merger between two of the nation's largest grocery store chains, [the state of Colorado filed suit against Albertsons and Kroger](#), the latter of which generated \$148 billion in revenue in 2022. [[Amanda Pampuro](#)]

» Two New York City cab drivers were [sentenced to terms of four and two years in prison](#) for their respective roles in a conspiracy with Russian hackers to hijack the digital queuing system for taxis waiting to pick up customers outside of New York’s busiest airport. [[Josh Russell](#)]



A group of 16- to 20-year-old hockey players [sued the NHL](#) over a practice of designating geographic territories for major junior leagues and clubs to recruit players. [[Nika Schoonover](#)]

[Sidebar — a podcast from Courthouse News](#)



Dating is a scam! That's not us being bitter — the advent of online dating opened the door for all kinds of schemes to take advantage of members of the Lonely Hearts Club.

Let's say your Valentine *doesn't* turn out to be a scheming catfish. You may still face fraudulent fiascos when buying your sweetheart chocolates or prepping for a romantic brunch, thanks to misleading labels that some attorneys are on a mission to remedy.

Sidebar co-host [Amanda Pampuro](#) breaks it all down in the latest episode, just in time for cuffing season. Listen to "[Love is a lie](#)" wherever you get your podcasts.

Subscribe and listen: [Apple Podcasts](#) | [Spotify](#) | [YouTube](#)



A Sacramento federal judge [said he was leaning toward dismissing a claim](#) against a hive of honey companies accused of dealing not in genuine honey, but in a product featuring foreign sugars and faulty processing, while passing it off as the real thing. [[Alan Riquelmy](#)]

#### [ICYMI: New cases and rulings on our radar](#)

» **No guns in public in Hawaii:** HONOLULU — The Hawaii Supreme Court [found a lower court improperly dismissed charges](#) against someone who was arrested for firearm possession after brandishing an AR-15 and pistol in public. The state’s constitution does not guarantee a right to carry guns in public, and extends the right only to a well regulated militia instead: “It is a misplaced view to think that today’s public safety laws must look like laws passed long ago.”

» **Meta Pixel vs privacy:** SAN FRANCISCO — A federal court in California [denied Meta Platforms’ attempt to toss class privacy claims](#) over Meta’s tracking tech, the Pixel, which web users say collects private medical data from users. Meta claims it is just a “passive” recipient of private information, which is not enough to shield them from liability, especially considering the class has shown that Meta aggressively targeted different websites to be potential clients for Meta Pixel.

» **Jail for celebrating the verdict:** PHILADELPHIA — The Pennsylvania Superior Court [upheld the sentence of a man to 5-10 days in county jail for contempt](#) because, after a jury found him not guilty of sexual assault charges, he slapped the table four times in celebration. “You did a ... ‘Look at me, I won,’ in the face of the prosecutor, in the face of the victim,” the judge had admonished him.

— [Daniel Conrad](#)

#### **Top 8: This week's most-read stories**

*From across the Courthouse News website, including news from Capitol Hill, state legislative decisions and major research developments.*

1. [Supreme Court sets brief schedule for Trump immunity appeal](#)
2. [Judges frustrated as Scientology head David Miscavige dodges summons](#)
3. [‘Gilbert Goons’ victim sues teen perpetrators of vicious beatings](#)
4. [\[Brief\] Unfair, but not discriminatory, firing](#)
5. [Federal government has to face false debt reporting lawsuit, Supreme Court rules](#)
6. [Judge confirms hearing on relationship between Trump prosecutors](#)
7. [\[Brief\] Mobile home rent control](#)
8. [Carlson interview: Putin declares defeating Russia ‘impossible,’ calls on West to start talks to end Ukraine war](#)

© 2023 Courthouse News Service  
[www.courthousenews.com](http://www.courthousenews.com)

[Unsubscribe](#) - [Unsubscribe Preferences](#)