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Federal District Court Civil Decisions, 1981-1987:  
Detroit, Houston, and Kansas City

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C.K. Rowland

ICPSR 9367

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FEDERAL DISTRICT COURT CIVIL DECISIONS, 1981-1987:  
DETROIT, HOUSTON, AND KANSAS CITY

(ICPSR 9367)

Principal Investigator

C.K. Rowland

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C.K. Rowland

FEDERAL DISTRICT COURT CIVIL DECISIONS, 1981-1987: DETROIT, HOUSTON, AND KANSAS CITY (ICPSR 9367)

SUMMARY: These data describe unpublished civil cases filed and terminated in the three federal district courts of Detroit, Michigan, Houston, Texas, and Kansas City, Missouri, between 1981 and 1987. The data were collected to enable researchers to measure the relative influence of local legal environments and politicized judicial appointments on unpublished substantive and procedural outcomes. Variables in the collection specify the date a case was filed and terminated, type of case filed, specific judgment and nature of the decision, whether a monetary award was granted and, if so, the amount involved. Information also is included on whether a government litigant was involved, if a jury trial was requested and by whom, type of attorney for plaintiff and defendant, type and number of motions filed (and by whom), and outcome of appeal, if applicable. CLASS IV

UNIVERSE: Civil federal district court cases filed and terminated in Houston, Detroit, and Kansas City, between 1981 and 1987.

EXTENT OF COLLECTION: 1 data file  
DATA FORMAT: Logical Record Length

File Structure: rectangular  
Cases: 7,995  
Variables: 37  
Record Length: 60  
Records Per Case: 1



Federal District Judges' Civil Decisions, 1981-1987,  
Detroit, MI, Houston, TX, and Kansas City, MO

9367

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Federal District Judges' Civil Decisions, 1981-1987,  
Detroit, MI, Houston, TX, and Kansas City, MO

File Description

The data represent civil cases filed at Federal District Courts in Detroit, MI, Houston, TX, and Kansas City, MO. Each record represents one civil case, compiled from docket sheets at the federal district courts in Detroit, Michigan, Houston, Texas, and Kansas City, Missouri. The cases represent a weighted random sample of civil cases from each court point. Cases were weighted to increase the representation of cases from 1984-1987. The logical record length of each file is 80 characters. There are 7,995 cases in this data file. Each record is 60 columns wide. The beginning and ending locations of the variables (column numbers) and the column width are noted at the beginning of each variable description in the data dictionary. There are no negative numbers or decimals. Missing data are indicated by codes unique to each variable.



Data Dictionary

	<u>Variable</u> <u>Name</u>	<u>Column Numbers &amp;</u> <u>Var. Length</u>	<u>Variable</u> <u>Description</u>
1	CRTPOINT	1 1 col.	Federal court point 1 Detroit, Michigan 2 Houston, Texas 3 Kansas City, Missouri
2	JUDGE	2-5 4 cols.	Federal district judge's code number (provided on civil cover sheet)

Identification of individual judges has  
been eliminated due to reasons of confidentiality.

Variable Name	Column Numbers & Var. Length	Variable Description
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3	YEAR 6-7 2 cols.	Last 2 digits of year case filed (1981-1987)
4	DOCNUM 8-11 4 cols.	Docket number provided on civil cover sheet
5	FILMONTH 12-13	Month the case was filed
6	FILEDAY 14-15 2 cols.	Day the case was filed
7	FILEYEAR 16-17 2 cols.	Year the case was filed
8	CASETYPE 18-20 3 cols.	Type of case, as coded on civil cover sheet with additional categories (445-449, 451) for employment discrimination cases filed in Kansas City, Missouri

110 Insurance contract  
 120 Marine contract  
 130 Miller Act  
 140 Negotiable instrument  
 150 Recovery by U.S. of overpayment and enforcement of judgment  
 151 Medicare Act  
 152 Recovery of defaulted student loan  
 153 Recovery of overpayment of veterans' benefits  
 160 Stockholders' suits  
 190 Other contract cases  
 195 Contract product liability  
 210 Land condemnation  
 220 Foreclosure  
 230 Rent lease and ejectment  
 240 Torts to land  
 245 Tort product liability  
 290 All other real property  
 310 Airplane: personal injury  
 315 Airplane: product liability  
 320 Assault, libel, and slander  
 330 Federal employers' liability  
 340 Marine: personal injury  
 345 Marine: product liability  
 350 Motor vehicle: personal injury  
 355 Motor vehicle: product liability  
 360 Other personal injury  
 362 Personal injury: medical malpractice  
 365 Personal injury: product liability  
 368 Asbestos personal injury & product liability  
 370 Other fraud  
 371 Truth in lending  
 380 Other personal property damage  
 385 Property damage product liability



## Variable Column Numbers &amp;

<u>Name</u>	<u>Var. Length</u>	<u>Variable Description</u>
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CASETYPE (cont.)	18-20 3 cols.	Type of case
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400	State reapportionment
410	Antitrust
430	Banks and Banking
450	Commerce and ICC rates
460	Deportation
422	Bankruptcy Appeal (28 USC 158)
423	Bankruptcy Withdrawal (28 USC 157)
441	Voting rights
442	Employment discrimination (general)
443	Discrimination in accomodations
444	Discrimination in welfare
445	Age discrimination
446	Gender discrimination
447	Race discrimination
448	Handicapped discrimination
449	Two or more types of discrimination
451	Religious discrimination
440	Other civil rights cases
510	Prisoner petitioners' motions to vacate sentences (28 USC 2255)
530	Habeas corpus
540	Writ of mandamus and other
550	Prisoner petitioners' civil rights
610	Forfeiture/Penalty: Agriculture
620	Forfeiture/Penalty: Food & drug
630	Forfeiture/Penalty: Liquor laws
640	Forfeiture/Penalty: Railroad and truck
650	Forfeiture/Penalty: Airline regulations
660	Forfeiture/Penalty: Occupational Safety and Health
690	Other forfeiture/penalty
710	Fair Labor Standards Act
720	Labor & Management Relations
730	Labor and Management Reporting and Disclosure Act
740	Railway Labor Act
790	Other labor litigation
791	Employees Retirement Income Security Act (ERISA)
820	Copyrights
830	Patent rights
840	Trademark cases

Variable Name	Column Numbers & Var. Length	Variable Description
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CASETYPE 18-20  
(cont.) 3 cols.

Type of case

- 861 Social Security: HIA (1395ff)
- 862 Social Security: Black Lung (923)
- 863 Social Security: DIWC or DIWW (405(g)): Disability
- 864 Social Security: SSID Title XVI
- 865 Social Security: RSI (405(g))
- 870 Taxes
- 871 IRS: Third Party (26 USC 7609)
- 875 Taxes: Customer Challenge (12 USC 3410)
- 810 Selective Service
- 850 Securities/Commodities/Exchange
- 891 Agricultural Acts
- 892 Economic Stabilization Act
- 893 Environmental Matters
- 894 Energy Allocation Act
- 895 Freedom of Information Act
- 900 Appeal of Free Determination under Equal Access to Justice
- 950 Constitutionality of State Statutes
- 890 Other Statutory Actions

9 GOVTLITG 21  
1 col.

Is a government litigant involved in the case?

- 1 No
- 2 Federal plaintiff
- 3 Federal defendant
- 4 State plaintiff
- 5 State defendant
- 6 County plaintiff
- 7 County defendant
- 8 City defendant
- 9 Other (or more than 1 government litigant)

10 JURYDEMD 22  
1 col.

Did a litigant demand a jury trial?

- 1 No
- 2 Plaintiff requested jury trial
- 3 Defendant requested jury trial
- 4 Both litigants requested a jury trial
- 5 A litigant demanded a jury trial, but the litigant requesting the jury was not recorded on the case's docket sheets
- 9 Information about jury demand was not recorded on the case's docket sheets

Variable Name	Column Numbers & Var. Length	Variable Description
11 PLTATTY	23 1 col.	Type of attorney for plaintiff <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 Private attorney</li> <li>2 State attorney</li> <li>3 US attorney or Federal public defender</li> <li>4 Plaintiff proceeded pro se</li> <li>5 Legal aid attorney</li> <li>6 County attorney</li> <li>7 County public defender</li> <li>8 No attorney was listed on the docket sheets for the case</li> <li>9 City attorney</li> </ol>
12 DEFATTY	24 1 col.	Type of attorney for defendant <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 Private attorney</li> <li>2 State attorney</li> <li>3 U.S. attorney or Federal public defender</li> <li>4 Defendant proceeded pro se</li> <li>5 No attorney was listed on the docket sheets</li> <li>6 Legal aid attorney</li> <li>7 City or county attorney, or more than one attorney</li> </ol>
13 TERMONTH	25-26 2 cols.	Month the case was terminated
14 TERMDAY	27-28 2 cols.	Day the case was terminated
15 TERMYEAR	29-30 2 cols.	Year the case that case was terminated
16 ARBITRAT	31 1 col.	Was arbitration recommended, ordered, or used? <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 No</li> <li>2 No; attorneys were notified by letter that arbitration could be used in the case</li> <li>3 No; arbitration hearing was scheduled, then cancelled</li> <li>4 Yes, arbitration was used</li> <li>5 Case dismissed; arbitration hearing was scheduled, but docket sheets didn't note that the hearing took place</li> <li>9 No information recorded in docket book</li> </ol>
17 LITIGATN	32 1 col.	Nature of the decision made in the case <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 Judgment by federal district judge</li> <li>2 Default judgment: Defendant did not respond to court order; judge's decision</li> <li>3 Settlement between litigants</li> <li>4 Case was transferred to another court</li> <li>5 Case was remanded to a lower court</li> <li>6 Consent judgment (judge's decision)</li> </ol>

Variable Name	Column Numbers & Var. Length	Variable Description
LITIGATN (continued)	32	Nature of the decision made in the case 7 There was no information on who made the final decision in the case (for example, to dismiss the case) 9 Other type of decision
18 DISMISS	33 1 col.	Was the case dismissed? 1 Not dismissed 2 Dismissed with prejudice (plaintiff may not refile a similar case in this court point) 3 Dismissed without prejudice to refile 4 Dismissed; no information on prejudice 5 Dismissed in part 6 Dismissed after arbitration; no information on prejudice 7 Dismissed with prejudice, in part 8 Dismissed after arbitration, with prejudice 9 Dismissed after arbitration without prejudice
19 JURYJGMT	34 1 col.	Jury verdict? 1 No 2 Yes 3 Litigants settled after the case went to jury for at least 1 day
20 JUDGMENT	35-36 2 cols.	Specific judgment or result of case 1 Settled (includes voluntary non-prisoner-petitioner dismissal by plaintiff) 2 Judge dismissed case: Frivolous 3 Judge dismissed case: Failure to prosecute 4 Judge dismissed case: Lack of Federal jurisdiction 5 Judge dismissed case: Prisoner petitioner or plaintiff has made no federal claim 6 Judge dismissed case: Prisoner petitioner plaintiff has not exhausted state remedies 7 Judge dismissed case: Facts presented by the plaintiff or petitioner are insufficient to support the claim 8 Judge dismissed case: Plaintiff or prisoner petitioner did not respond to court order(s) 9 Judge dismissed case: Plaintiff or prisoner petitioner did not have standing to sue 10 Judge dismissed: Judge denied habeas corpus 11 Judge's decision: Partially for and partially against prisoner petitioner 12 Judge's decision: For prisoner petitioner 13 Judge dismissed case: Prisoner petition dismissed for a reason not listed here

Variable Name	Column Numbers & Var. Length	Variable Description
JUDGMENT (continued)	35-36	Specific judgment or result of case
	14	Judge dismissed case: Prisoner petitioner's motion to vacate is dismissed
	15	Judge dismissed case: Civil rights decision
	16	Judge dismissed case: Prisoner petitioner had no claim & had not exhausted state remedies
	17	Voluntary dismissal by prisoner petitioner
	18	Judge dismissed case: Prisoner petitioner had no claim & had filed a frivolous claim
	19	Judge dismissed case: Denied prisoner petition for writ of mandamus
	20	Judge's decision: Consent judgment between plaintiff and defendant
	21	Judge's decision: For plaintiff in fringe benefit (ERISA) suit
	22	Judge's decision: For plaintiff (in cases other than ERISA suits), with monetary award
	23	Judge's decision: For defendant
	24	Judge's decision: For plaintiff
	25	Judge's decision: Partially for defendant, partially for plaintiff
	26	Judge's decision: Injunction against defendant
	27	Judge's decision: Injunction against defendant, with monetary award
	28	Judge's decision: Defendant's property is forfeited to U.S.
	29	Conditional dismissal by judge
	30	Jury verdict for defendant
	31	Jury verdict for plaintiff
	32	Jury verdict: Partially for plaintiff, partially for defendant
	33	Judge granted defendant's motion for summary judgment or dismissal
	34	Judge denied defendant's motion for summary judgment of dismissal
	35	Judge dismissed because plaintiff was not a prevailing party (42 USC)
	36	Jury verdict for defendant, judge's decision for defendant
	40	Case transferred to another district at defendant's request
	41	Case transferred at plaintiff's request
	42	Case transferred at defendant's & plaintiff's request
	43	Case transferred; no information on docket sheets about requesting party
	44	Case remanded to a lower court
	45	Case referred to another court or agency
	50	Judge decided in civil rights decision that defendant must promote plaintiff
	51	Judge dismissed case: Other non-prisoner petitioner decision not included above
	52	Judge's decision: Case must go through arbitration (or follow arbitrator's provisions)

Variable Name	Column Numbers & Var. Length	Variable Description
JUDGMENT (continued)	35-36	Specific judgment or result of case
	53	Judge's decision: Action is stayed pending administrative exhaustion of plaintiff's charge(s)
	54	Judge's decision: Summary judgment for plaintiff
	55	Judge's decision: For defendant; complaint dismissed
	56	Judge's decision: For plaintiff (U.S. govt.); ordered defendant to appear before IRS agent
	57	Judge granted discontinuance
	58	Case dismissed; no information on the party dismissing the case
	59	Judge dismissed case: lack of progress in case
	60	Judge awarded attorney fees (recipient litigant not listed on docket sheets)
	61	Dismissal of appeal or withdrawal of appeal by bankruptcy plaintiff
	62	District court judgment was affirmed
	63	Judge denied bankruptcy appeal
	64	Judge dismissed case: No cause on plaintiff's complaint
	65	Judge dismissed case with prejudice: Plaintiff cannot take further action
	66	Judge's decision: For plaintiff: Injunction is dissolved and case is remanded to bankruptcy court
	67	Judge's decision: Order of removal or removal of action as pending matter
	68	Judge's decision: Stay of proceedings
	69	Judge's decision: Case reclassified as criminal
	70	Judge's decision: Case transferred to U.S. Court of Appeals
	71	Judge's decision: Case closed pending hearing or ruling
	72	Judge's decision: Granted litigant's motion to dismiss (no information distinguishing litigants)
	73	Judge's decision: Granted litigant's motion to quash subpoena (no information distinguishing litigant)
	74	Judge's decision: Granted litigant's motion for summary judgment (no information distinguishing litigant)
	75	Judge's decision: Denied litigant's motion to quash subpoena (no information distinguishing litigant)
	76	Judge's decision: This case is consolidated with other cases
	77	Judge's decision: Denied litigant's request to stay judgment (no information distinguishing litigant)

Variable Name	Column Numbers & Var. Length	Variable Description
21 IFP	37 1 col.	<p>Did judge grant plaintiff or prisoner petitioner in forma pauperis status?</p> <p>1 No; plaintiff or petitioner did not request in forma pauperis status  2 Yes, judge granted status for this case only  3 Judge granted in forma pauperis status  4 Judge denied in forma pauperis status  5 Case transferred; transferring judge will decide on in forma pauperis status  6 Judge granted in forma pauperis status, then denied status during the course of the case  9 Relevant information wasn't recorded for this case</p>
22 PLMOFIL	38 1 col.	<p>Number of plaintiffs' motions filed in the case, other than those for in forma pauperis, dismissal, summary judgment, and to vacate sentence or decision  - Most numerous: Motion requesting more time</p> <p>9 Relevant information wasn't recorded for this case</p>
23 PLMOGRT	39 1 col.	<p>Number of plaintiffs' motions that are granted by the judge in the case</p> <p>9 Relevant information wasn't recorded for this case</p>
24 SUMJUDG	40 1 col.	<p>Defendant's motion for summary judgment</p> <p>1 No, defendant didn't file such a motion  2 Yes, motion filed and granted by judge  3 Yes, motion filed and denied by judge  4 Yes, motion filed and judge granted it in part and denied it in part  9 Relevant information wasn't recorded for this case</p>
25 MOTNDISM	41 1 col.	<p>Defendant's motion for dismissal of case</p> <p>1 No, defendant didn't file such a motion  2 Yes, motion filed and granted by judge  3 Yes, motion filed and denied by judge  4 Yes, motion filed and judge granted it in part and denied it in part  9 Relevant information wasn't recorded for this case</p>

## Variable Column Numbers &amp;

Variable Name	Var. Length	Variable Description
26 DEFMOTN	42 1 col.	Other motions filed by defendant
		1 1 filed, 1 granted
		2 1 filed, 1 denied
		3 2 filed, 2 granted
		4 2 filed, 2 denied
		5 2 filed, 1 granted, 1 denied
		6 3 or more motions filed, all granted
		7 3 or more motions filed, all denied
		8 3 or more motions filed; some motions were denied and some were granted
		9 Kansas City: no motions were filed Detroit & Houston: Information not recorded
27 COSTS	43 1 col.	Which party paid the costs of the litigation?
		1 Plaintiff
		2 Defendant
		3 Each litigant paid its own costs
		4 The judge did not order either party to pay the costs of the case
		5 Not applicable (i.e., pro se civil rights case or prisoner petition)
		6 Information on paying litigant was not recorded
		7 Both litigants pay part of the costs
		8 Information on paying litigant not available
		9 Docket sheet does not reveal this information
28 AWARD	44-50 7 cols.	Monetary award in civil case
		0000000 Judge did not grant a monetary award, although plaintiff sought one (specific notation on docket sheet that judge made decision not to grant monetary award)
		0000001 No monetary award noted in docket sheet
		9999999 Judge or jury granted award, but its worth was not disclosed on the docket sheet
		8888888 Monetary award was not recorded
29 PUBLISHED	51 1 col.	Was the case published?
		1 Not published in the <u>Federal Supplement</u> or other casebook
		2 Published



Variable Column Numbers &  
Name Var. Length Variable Description

Variable Name	Column Numbers & Var. Length	Description
30 APPEAL	52 1 col.	Outcome of cases appealed to the U.S. Courts of Appeal <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 Case was not appealed</li> <li>2 Plaintiff's appeal was dismissed</li> <li>3 Plaintiff appealed; Court of Appeals affirmed district court's decision</li> <li>4 Plaintiff appealed, Court of Appeals reversed district court's decision</li> <li>5 Plaintiff appealed; Court of Appeals affirmed district court's decision in part and reversed, in part</li> <li>6 Defendant appealed; Court of Appeals affirmed district court's decision</li> <li>7 Defendant appealed; Court of Appeals reversed district court's decision</li> <li>8 Defendant appealed; Court of Appeals partially affirmed, and partially reversed district court's decision</li> <li>9 Other type of appellate decision, including joint dismissal by litigants</li> </ol>
31 JUDCHANG	53 1 col.	Was there a change in presiding judges during the course of the case? <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 No change of judges</li> <li>2 Change of judges</li> <li>9 This information wasn't recorded for the case</li> </ol>
32 APPT	54 1 col.	Judge's appointing president <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 Truman</li> <li>2 Eisenhower</li> <li>3 Kennedy</li> <li>4 Johnson</li> <li>5 Nixon</li> <li>6 Ford</li> <li>7 Carter</li> <li>8 Reagan</li> </ol>
33 PARTY	55 1 col.	Party of appointing president <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>0 Republican</li> <li>1 Democrat</li> </ol>

Variable Column Numbers &  
Name Var. Length Variable Description

34 TYPE 56-57  
 2 cols. Type of case filed

- 1 Prisoner petition
- 2 Civil rights
- 3 Labor
- 4 **Contracts**
- 5 **Property rights: copyright, patent, and trademark cases**
- 6 Forfeiture of property
- 7 Personal injury & product liability
- 8 Social security
- 9 Federal govt. recovering money from individuals: Student loans, overpayment of veterans' benefits
- 10 Other types of cases

35 OUTCOME 58  
 1 col. Outcome of case

- 1 No clear decision for or against litigants was made by judge or jury: i.e., litigants settled; case was transferred or remanded
- 2 Judge's decision or jury verdict for plaintiff
- 3 Judge's decision or jury verdict for defendant
- 4 Judge's decision or jury's verdict partially for both litigants

36 APPEALED 59  
 1 col. Was the case appealed?

- 1 Not appealed
- 2 Appealed to U.S. Court of Appeals

37 JURY 60  
 1 col. Did the case result in a jury verdict?

- 0 No jury verdict
- 1 Jury verdict

*gross data for assumed blanks*