
NO PERSONAL JURISDICTION OVER MISSOURI RESIDENT WHOSE SPOUSE HAS ARIZONA BUSINESS DEALINGS

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Sigmund v. Rea

Ct. Appeals, Div. One, February 1, 2011

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To determine whether the husband's unilateral business dealings in Arizona also conferred personal jurisdiction over his wife, the court of appeals looked to the law of the couple's matrimonial domicile – Missouri. Unlike Arizona, Missouri does not recognize the "marital community," and does not allow the unilateral actions of one spouse to create a community obligation. Thus, contrary to Plaintiff's argument that the husband's business dealings conferred a benefit on the "marital community," including the wife, no such "marital community" existed. The court therefore held that the wife did not have minimal contacts in Arizona to confer personal jurisdiction over her. The court limited its holding to the application of Missouri law, noting that it was not drawing "a bright line distinction between community property states and all other states."

The court distinguished this case from *Rollins v. Vidmar*, (App. 1985), which had held that the individual actions of one spouse were sufficient to establish minimum contacts for the other because the couple resided in a community property state and the community was liable for the contracts of either spouse.