

COMPILED BY SAMANTHA CHACKO

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IMPORTANT CASES THIS WEEK



West Virginia v. EPA



United States v. Knotts



Robinson v. California

West Virginia v. EPA

The future of climate change.



Photo from Forbes

This summer, the Court considered the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) regulatory authority within the Clean Air Act.

Evaluating the 2015 Clean Power Plan, which established guidelines for states to limit carbon dioxide emissions from power plants, SCOTUS ultimately held that without "clear congressional authorization," the EPA cannot promulgate a regulation of such "vast economic and political significance." Read the full decision [here](#).

United States v. Knotts

Electronic surveillance & the Fourth Amendment.

Based on investigation findings, narcotics agents tracked a vehicle using a radio transmitter and used that information to obtain a search warrant and make an arrest. The Court unanimously held that this use of electronic surveillance did not violate Knott's right to privacy as it falls under the privacy expectations of a vehicle and not a home. Justice Brennan's concurrence highlighted the problematic nature of the transmitter's original installation. Read the full decision [here](#).

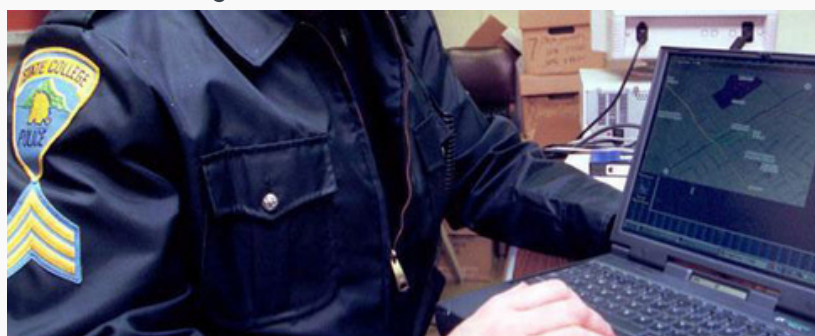


Photo from Politico

Robinson v. California

Addiction & the Eighth Amendment

Even though the defendant had never used any narcotic drug within California or been guilty of possession, a jury found the defendant guilty under a state statute that criminalized narcotic addiction. In this landmark case, SCOTUS likened criminalizing addiction to criminalizing mental illness and ruled that imprisoning an individual based on their "status" of addiction violated the Eighth Amendment. Read the full decision [here](#).



Photo from the Student Coalition on Addiction

SCMC's

LEGAL NEWS THIS WEEK

Suggestions by Victor Zhang

THE NEW TERM

This Monday marks the beginning of the Court's new term with Justice Ketanji Brown Jackson. Important cases on the Court's docket would implicate religious liberty and LGBT rights, universities' affirmative action policies, congressional redistricting plans, state legislatures' power to set rules for federal elections, and the Indian Child Welfare Act.

The Future of the Court

Justices commented on the legitimacy of the Court amid the historical dip in its approval rating. Earlier this month, Justice Kagan noted, "the thing that builds up reservoirs of public confidence is the court acting like a court and not acting like an extension of the political process." Chief Justice Roberts remarked in a Colorado appearance, "simply because people disagree with opinions is not a basis for questioning the legitimacy of the court." In a comment to the Wall Street Journal, Justice Alito argued, "[i]t goes without saying that everyone is free to express disagreement with our decisions and to criticize our reasoning as they see fit. But saying or implying that the court is becoming an illegitimate institution or questioning our integrity crosses an important line."

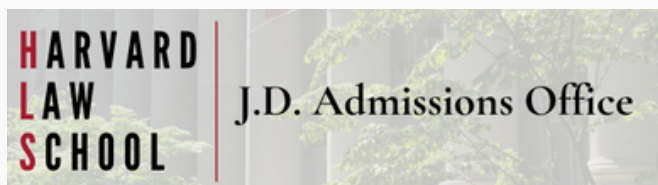


Photo from The Cut

Opportunities

A Discussion with Harvard Law School Admissions

A representative from Harvard Law School (HLS) will be visiting USC to give a brief presentation and answer questions about HLS and the law school admissions process. It will be in-person on Wednesday, October 5, from 12-1 pm Pacific Time in Room 102, Michelson Hall. You can sign up for this event with [this link](#).



#Influencing for Democracy: Mobilizing your Peers through Relational Organizing

This is a one-hour zoom event on Wednesday, October 12 at 8pm EST. It will provide a tutorial on Vote Save America's Every Last Vote tool, a short training on peer-to-peer organizing, and a Q&A from special guests on maximizing pro-voting social media engagement and getting active on your campus. You can sign up for this event [here](#).

