



A CIVICS IN
REAL LIFE SERIES
THE DOCKET

Civics is all around us. The United States Supreme Court is the highest court in the land. Through its power of judicial review, its decisions have a lasting impact on "We the People". So what is the Court hearing this session and how might the justices rule? Let's help each other expand our civic literacy.

2020-2021

**U.S. Supreme Court Case
UPDATES**

In the closing days of the 2020 Supreme Court term, the justices delivered their rulings in five key cases. Below is a matrix highlighting their opinions on the constitutional questions asked in these cases and resources to explore the impact these decisions may have on society.

Case & Constitutional Question	Ruling & Impact
<p>In Edwards v. Vannoy, the question Thedrick Edwards asked the Supreme Court to answer was whether its decision in Ramos v. Louisiana applies retroactively to cases on federal collateral review. In other words, does the Court's ruling in Ramos apply to felons whose cases are final because they have exhausted their appeals process (Edwards' case at the state level was decided in 2010) ?</p>	<p>On May 17, 2021, in a 6-3 decision, the Court ruled in favor of Vannoy that inmates whose convictions became final before the Court's ruling in Ramos v Louisiana cannot take advantage of jury unanimity in cases on federal collateral review. Remember, federal collateral review is the principle that applies to felons whose cases are final because they have exhausted their appeals process. <i>(Adapted from Oyez.)</i> View the SCOTUSblog post on the ruling and potential impact on future cases.</p>
<p>In Fulton v. City of Philadelphia, the Court was asked to address these three questions: 1. To succeed on their free exercise claim, must plaintiffs prove that the government would allow the same conduct by someone who held different religious views, or only provide sufficient evidence that a law is not neutral and generally applicable? 2. Should the Court revisit its decision in Employment Division v. Smith? 3. Does the government violate the First Amendment by conditioning a religious agency's ability to participate in the foster care system on taking actions and making statements that directly contradict the agency's religious beliefs?</p>	<p>On June 17, 2021, in a 9-0 decision, the Court ruled in favor of Fulton that the refusal of Philadelphia to contract with Catholic Social Services (CSS) for the provision of foster care services unless CSS agrees to certify same-sex couples as foster parents violates the Free Exercise Clause of the First Amendment. Chief Justice John Roberts authored the majority opinion of the Court. <i>(Adapted from Oyez.)</i> View the SCOTUSblog post on the ruling and potential impact on future cases.</p>
<p>In Lange v. California, the question the Court considered was: Does pursuit of a person who a police officer has probable cause to believe has committed a misdemeanor categorically qualify as an exigent circumstance sufficient to allow the officer to enter a home without a warrant?</p>	<p>On June 23, 2021, in a 9-0 decision, the Court ruled in favor of Lange that pursuit of a fleeing misdemeanor suspect does not categorically qualify as an exigent circumstance justifying a warrantless entry into a home. Justice Elena Kagan authored the majority opinion of the Court. <i>(Adapted from Oyez.)</i> View the SCOTUSblog post on the ruling and potential impact on future cases.</p>
<p>In Mahanoy Area School District v. B.L., the question the Supreme Court was asked to address was "whether Tinker v. Des Moines Independent Community School District, which holds that public school officials may regulate speech that would materially and substantially disrupt the work and discipline of the school, applies to student speech that occurs off campus."</p>	<p>On June 23, 2021, in a 8-1 decision, the Court ruled in favor of B.L that the First Amendment limits but does not entirely prohibit regulation of off-campus student speech by public school officials, and, in this case, the school district's decision to suspend B.L. from the cheerleading team for posting to social media vulgar language and gestures critical of the school violates the First Amendment. Justice Stephen Breyer authored the 8-1 majority opinion of the Court. <i>(Adapted from Oyez.)</i> View the SCOTUSblog post on the ruling and potential impact on future cases.</p>
<p>In NCAA v. Alston, the NCAA asked the Court to decide "whether the Ninth Circuit erroneously held, in conflict with decisions of other circuits and general antitrust principles, that the National Collegiate Athletic Association eligibility rules regarding compensation of student-athletes violate federal antitrust law."</p>	<p>On June 21, 2021, in a 9-0 decision, the Court ruled in favor of Alston that the NCAA's rules restricting certain education-related benefits for student-athletes violate federal antitrust laws. <i>(Adapted from Oyez.)</i> View the SCOTUSblog post on the ruling and potential impact on future cases.</p>



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