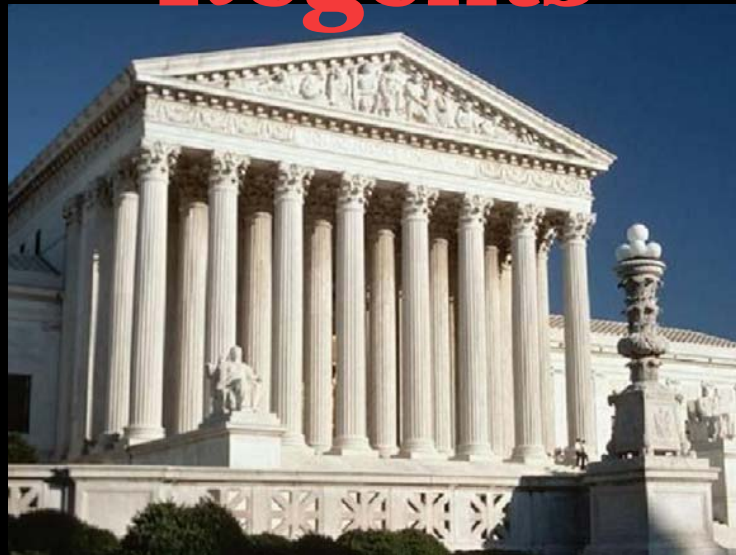


Vital Supreme Court Cases to know for the U.S. History and Government Regents



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Supreme Court of the United States

The important court cases you should know for your U.S. History and Government Regents exam can be divided into four categories:

- Cases which **expanded the power of the Federal government.**
- Cases which **expanded the rights of the individual.**
- Cases which **limited individual rights.**
- Cases which dealt with the **power of government.**

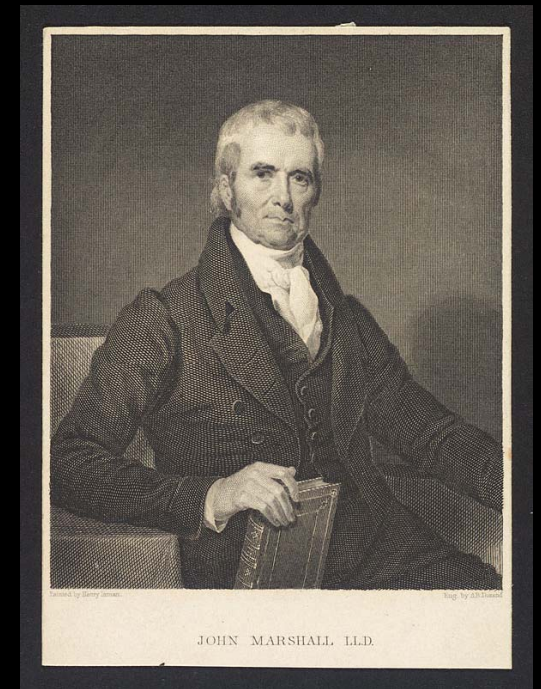
...Expand the Power of the Federal Government

- ***Marbury v. Madison* – 1803**
 - Judicial v. Executive and Congressional Power
 - Judicial Review/Separation of powers
- ***McCulloch v. Maryland* – 1819**
 - Supremacy v. State Rights; Elastic Clause
 - Judicial Review; Federalism
- ***Gibbons v. Ogden* – 1824**
 - Interstate Commerce Clause (Art. I, Sect.8) v. States Rights
 - Judicial Review/Federalism

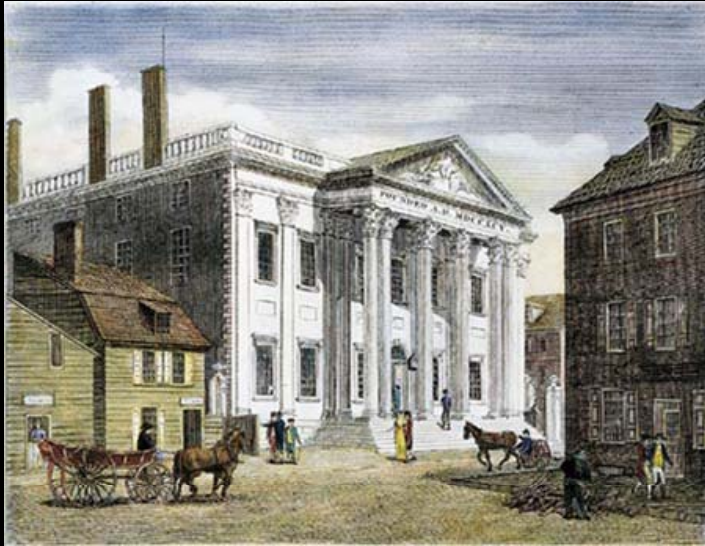


***Marbury v. Madison* - 1803**

- **Quick Summary:**
 - Appointment of midnight justices by John Adams rejected by Thomas Jefferson. Supreme Court must decide constitutionality of Judiciary Act.
- **Outcome:**
 - John Marshall declares Judiciary Act unconstitutional The Supreme Court has the right of Judicial Review.



McCulloch v. Maryland – 1819



- **Quick Summary:**
 - Maryland attempts to tax the National Bank of the United States. The court must decide whether Bank is legitimate under the elastic clause and whether Maryland can tax it.
- **Outcome:**
 - John Marshall declares "the power to tax is the power to destroy." The Supremacy Clause of the Constitution prohibits state taxation of a federal institution.

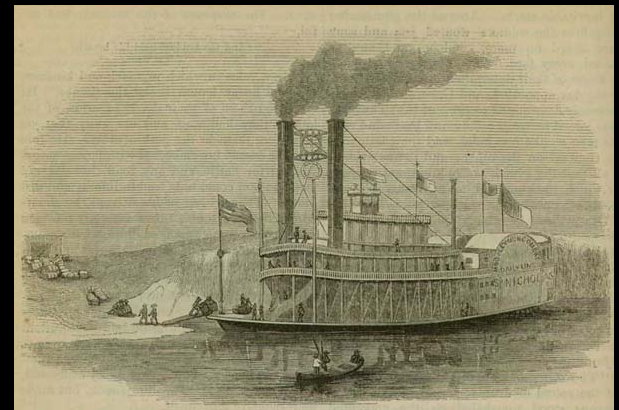
Gibbons v. Ogden – 1824

- **Summary:**

- Ogden receives exclusive right from New York to use Steam boat to navigate in New York and to N.J. Gibbons gets right from Congress.

- **Outcome:**

- John Marshall declares that Congress has the exclusive authority to regulate Interstate Commerce, especially when it involves a "stream of commerce."



...Expand Individual Rights

- ***Brown v. Board of Education (Topeka, KS) – 1954***
 - Fourteenth Amendment equal protection clause v. School's Tenth Amendment Reserve Power of education
 - Civil Rights/rights of ethnic minorities
- ***Mapp v. Ohio – 1961***
 - Fourth and Fourteenth Amendments v. Tenth Amendment
 - Bill of Rights/Search and Seizure/Reserved Police Power of the States
- ***Engel v. Vitale – 1962***
 - First Amendment Establishment Clause and Fourteenth Amendment v First Amendment Free Exercise Clause and Tenth Amendment.
 - Bill of Rights/Separation of Church and State

...Expand Individual Rights continued...

- ***Gideon v. Wainwright*** – 1963
 - Fifth, Sixth and Fourteenth Amendments v. 10th Amendment
 - Bill of Rights/Due Process/ Right to an attorney
- ***Miranda v. Arizona*** – 1966
 - Fifth, Sixth and Fourteenth Amendments v. Tenth Amendment
 - Bill of Rights/Due Process/Right against self-incrimination/Right to an attorney v. Police Power
- ***Tinker v. Des Moines*** – 1969
 - First Amendment free speech, Fourteenth Amendment v. Tenth Amendment education as a reserved power.
 - Bill of Rights/Civil Liberties
- ***Roe v. Wade*** – 1973
 - Fourth amendment right to privacy, ninth amendment rights not listed in the Constitution and the Fourteenth Amendment v. the Tenth Amendment health reserved power of the states.
 - The rights of women/contemporary social issues

Brown v. Board of Education **(Topeka, KS) – 1954**

- **Summary:**

- Linda Brown denied enrollment in an all white school near her home challenges the separate but equal policy of the Topeka school district.



- **Outcome:**

- In one of the most celebrated cases, the court struck down separate but equal and ordered integration in the nation's schools with "all deliberate speed."

Mapp v. Ohio – 1961



- **Summary:**

- Dollere Mapp was accused of harboring a dangerous criminal. The police searched her house without a warrant and found other illegal material which they used to prosecute Mapp.

- **Outcome:**

- The exclusionary rule was established by the Supreme Court. States were not allowed to introduce illegally obtained evidence in a trial.

Engel v. Vitale – 1962

- **Summary:**

- A group of parents and students challenged the New York State Board of Regents mandatory non-denominational prayer in school.



- **Outcome:**

- The Supreme Court decided that the prayer violated the Separation of Church and State.

Gideon v. Wainwright – 1963



- **Summary:**

- Gideon was accused of a felony by Florida and did not have attorney representation because he could not afford one.

- **Outcome:**

- Based on his "pauper" appeal to the Supreme Court, it decided that regardless of the crime, Gideon had the right to an attorney.

Miranda v. Arizona – 1966

- **Summary:**

- Ernesto Miranda was arrested, interrogated and confessed to rape without the police informing him of his right to remain silent or have an attorney after his arrest.



- **Outcome:**

- One of the most important cases decided by the Supreme Court, it directed police to give "Miranda Warnings" immediately after a person is arrested.

Tinker v. Des Moines – 1969



- **Summary:**
 - Three public school students wore black arm bands to school to protest the Vietnam War. Principals in their school district had prohibited the wearing of armbands on the ground that such conduct would provoke a disturbance, so the students were suspended from school.
- **Outcome:**
 - The court declared that "student rights do not stop at the schoolhouse gates." The wearing of black arm bands was protected by the Constitution. Students enjoy protection of the Bill of Rights unless their actions materially disrupt the educational environment.

Roe v. Wade – 1973



- **Summary:**
 - A Texas woman has an abortion violating Texas state law. Abortion at the time is legal in some states and illegal in others.
- **Outcome:**
 - A constitutional right to an abortion is established under the “right to privacy,” though the court laid down a trimester criteria in determining whether states can impose restrictions.

...Limit Individual Rights

- ***The Dred Scott Decision – 1857***
 - Article III citizenship rights v. Fifth Amendment property rights.
 - Civil War causes/ Federalism/Equality/Rights of Ethnic Groups
- ***Plessy v. Ferguson – 1896***
 - Fourteenth Amendment equal protection clause v. Louisiana's Tenth Amendment Reserved power right to legislate.
 - Equality/ Federalism/Jim Crow
- ***Schenck v. United States – 1919***
 - First Amendment, free speech and assembly for Debs v. Congress' Article I ability to wage war.
 - World War I/Clear and Present Danger/National Power

...Limited Individual Rights continued...

- ***Korematsu v. United States* – 1944**
 - Fourteenth Amendment equal protection clause, v. Article II power of the president.
 - Civil Liberties/Rights of ethnic minorities/World War II/Power of President in Foreign Affairs
- ***United States v. Nixon* – 1974**
 - Article I power of Congress v Article II power of the president
 - Separation of Powers/Watergate
- ***New Jersey v. TLO* – 1985**
 - Tenth Amendment reserved power of education v. Fourth and Fourteenth Amendments
 - Bill of Rights/Due Process/Search and Seizure v. police and education reserved power of the school.

The Dred Scott Decision – 1857

- **Summary:**
 - Dred Scott was a slave who was brought into free Territory as defined by the Missouri Compromise.
- **Outcome:**
 - The Supreme Court declared that slaves were property and as such were not protected by the Constitution. It also declared the Missouri Compromise unconstitutional.



Plessy v. Ferguson – 1896



- **Summary:**
 - The state of Louisiana enacted a law that required separate railway cars for blacks and whites. In 1892, Homer Adolph Plessy--who was seven-eighths Caucasian--took a seat in a "whites only" car of a Louisiana train. He refused to move to the car reserved for blacks and was arrested.
- **Outcome:**
 - The Supreme Court ruled that the "separate but equal" provision of the Louisiana law was constitutional. The case established this principle of segregation until it was overturned in 1954.

***Schenck v. United States* – 1919**

- **Summary:**
 - Schenck was charged with conspiracy to violate the Espionage Act by attempting to cause insubordination in the military and to obstruct recruitment.
- **Outcome:**
 - The Court ruled that by obstructing the process in which people would be recruited or register for the armed forces, Schenck did violate the act. The "clear and present danger" doctrine was established by this case.

Korematsu v. United States – 1944

- **Summary:**

- During World War II, Presidential Executive Order 9066 and congressional statutes gave the military authority to exclude citizens of Japanese ancestry from areas deemed critical to national defense. Korematsu remained in California and violated Civilian Exclusion Order No. 34 of the U.S. Army.

- **Outcome:**

- The Supreme Court ruled that the President had the right to issue the Executive order as Commander-in-Chief. In 1988 Congress passed a law giving \$20,000 to all ancestors of Japanese-Americans who were put in these camps.



United States v. Nixon – 1974

- **Summary:**

President Nixon asserted that he was immune from the subpoena claiming "executive privilege," which is the right to withhold information from other government branches to preserve confidential communications within the executive branch or to secure the national interest and refused to hand over Watergate related tapes.



- **Outcome:**

- The Court ruled unanimously that the president had to turn over the tapes and that executive privilege could not be invoked in a potential criminal activity. Shortly after turning over the tapes, Nixon resigned from office.

New Jersey v. TLO – 1985

- **Summary:**
 - TLO was accused of smoking in the bathroom. The principal searches her pocketbook without her permission and discovers cigarettes as well as other illegal substances.
- **Outcome:**
 - Court rules that schools can search students with reasonable cause. This case lessens the Tinker doctrine and gives school officials greater latitude in disciplining students.



Power of Government

- *Wabash Railway v. Illinois* – 1886
 - Individual Property Rights v. States Rights/Commerce Clause
- *United States v. E.C. Knight* – 1895
 - Article I, Section VIII the commerce clause v. the Fifth Amendment property rights of Knight.
 - Growth of Monopolies/Captains of Industry/Gilded Age/Sherman Anti-Trust Act/Age of Industrialization
- *Muller v. Oregon* – 1908
 - Fourteenth Amendment property rights of Muller v. Tenth Amendment police power of Oregon.
 - Progressive Era/rights of women/ Property rights.

Power of Government, con't...

- *Schechter Poultry Corp. v. United States* – 1935
 - Fifth Amendment property right of *Schechter v.* Article I Section VIII commerce clause right of Congress.
 - Great Depression/New Deal/FDR/Court Packing/Separation of Powers
- *Escobedo v. Illinois* – 1964
 - Right to an Attorney/Self-Incrimination/Rights of the Accused v. States Rights

Wabash Railway v. Illinois – 1886

- **Summary:**
 - An Illinois statute imposed a penalty on railroads that charged the same or more money for passengers or freight shipped for shorter distances than longer distances. The issue is whether a state has the authority to regulate railroad prices on an intrastate portion of an interstate railway system.
- **Outcome:**
 - The Supreme Court held the statute to be invalid and that the power to regulate interstate railroad systems falls to Congress and not to the individual states. This case aided in the creation of the ICC or the Interstate Commerce Commission, which has the power to regulate interstate commerce.



United States v. E.C. Knight – 1895



- **Summary:**
 - The E.C. Knight Company was a combination controlling over 98 percent of the sugar-refining business in the United States. The U.S. accused Knight of violating the Sherman Anti-Trust Act.
- **Outcome:**
 - Because Knight diversified its product as a Trust of many sugar companies, the Court ruled it did not violate the restraint of trade provision of the Sherman Anti-Trust Act.

Muller v. Oregon – 1908



- **Summary:**
 - Oregon enacted a law that limited women to ten hours of work in factories and laundries. Muller challenges it after he orders a female employee to work longer hours.
- **Outcome:**
 - Louis Brandeis offers a "friend of the Court Amicus brief" arguing that women did not have the same physical capabilities as men and the Court ruled that Oregon's law was constitutional.



Schechter Poultry Corp. v. United States – 1935

- **Summary:**

- Section 3 of the National Industrial Recovery Act empowered the President to implement industrial codes to regulate weekly employment hours, wages, and minimum ages of employees. Schechter was accused of violating those codes by selling "sick chickens."

- **Outcome:**

- Calling it, the court of "nine old men" FDR was furious that the Supreme Court ruled the NRA unconstitutional because it gave to the president legislative power which the Constitution assigns to the Congress. After invalidating other New Deal laws, FDR proposes a court packing solution which the Congress rejects.

Escobedo v. Illinois – 1964

- **Summary:**

- Escobedo was arrested in 1960, in connection with the murder of his brother-in-law. After his arrest, he requested to see his lawyer, but was not allowed to do so. After persistent questioning by the police, Escobedo made a statement which was used against him at his trial and he was convicted of murder. The issue is whether the state of Illinois violated his 14th amendment protections, his 5th Amendment right to remain silent, and his 6th Amendment right to assistance of counsel by denying his request to speak to a lawyer before questioning.

- **Outcome:**

- The court found that the denial of by the police of Escobedo's right to counsel and their failure to inform him of his right to remain silent was unconstitutional. The court also held that incriminating statements made by defendants are inadmissible unless the accused his informed of his rights before making the statement.

