In the majority opinion of the Supreme Court, I believe the Fourth Amendment protects the rights of the accused preventing unreasonable search and seizures without warranrs and probable cause.The Founding Fathers framed it so that they could prevent England’s “general warrant,” which gave permission to search and seize everything in order to find evidence. The 4th Amendment gives security to the people in their personal property so that the feared British policy could not be possible. The problem is that the Fourth Amendment is not changing while the world around it is. With technologies being invented, such as GPS trackers and drones recording video surveillance, police are able to not physically get access into the person’s private property and search for evidence of illegal activity. The question is whether the Fourth Amendment protects against these new technologies.

Before a GPS tracker was invented, police had to follow the suspect in person. This was fully allowed by courts because the person was driving publicly and then trailed. The GPS simply takes the officers out of the equation. The police can use the tracker to remotely see the person’s coordinates as opposed to wasting many hours trailing the suspect in person. Dissenting opinions argue that placing the tracker on the private property of the citizen is in violation of the Fourth Amendment because it could be considered a search without a warrant, but the tracker is just as intrusive as a cop following the person. In brief, the tracker is not in violation of the Fourth Amendment because it is simply trailing the person remotely.

One of the most commonly used techniques police employ to gather evidence is a stake-out where the cops essentially stay in one spot and surveil a certain area for an indefinite amount of time. A drone flying above the area can surveil and send a live-feed to cops who can comfortably stake-out an area safely by being in the drone control room. The drone is a safe alternative to risking a cop’s life on the front lines searching for a potentially armed and dangerous criminal. The dissenting opinion does raise a valid point, though. The drone cannot be equipped with camera enhancements, such as Thermal Imaging, which was decided to be considered an unreasonable search without a warrant. To use more than a simple resolution equal to a binocular-discernable distance from a plane flying overhead the target would be considered an enhancement to the picture making it an unreasonable search without a warrant. The drone simply adds security and safety for the police officers but must be heavily restricted to prevent illegal searches with enhanced images.

In summary, the use of this technology is only removing the physical person from the search. These new technologies do not need new rules, because they are replacing old technology with less danger to the humans while still performing the same tasks as the previous technique. The Fourth Amendment does not protect from the GPS and a surveillance drone, but its provisions require that when using the drone, anything more powerful than the human eye is labeled an unreasonable search. It would still be possible to perform such surveillance with the Thermal Imaging Camera attachment, but the data gathered from that was obtained unreasonably without a warrant, so while the information may confirm the suspect is engaging in illegal activity, that evidence can not be used without a warrant.