When the United States Constitution was created, the technology available was simpler than what is common in the world today. Modern technology functions differently from the technology of the 1700s, and so laws that came into being during that time period must be interpreted to fit today’s world, as is the case with the Fourth Amendment, which offers citizens protection against unreasonable search. Technology has created connections between phones, GPS systems, and more. The question is how many of these connections the Fourth Amendment covers.

The first time the Fourth Amendment was called into question due to technology was the case of *Olmstead v. the United States*. Roy Olmstead was convicted of selling illegal liquor. At his trial, evidence was obtained by a wiretap on his phone lines. Olmstead argued that because the calls had been placed within his home, the Fourth Amendment was violated, as it would be an unreasonable search and seizure. The court, however, decided that since the tap had been placed outside of the home, it wasn’t a violation. This precedent was overturned, however in the case of *Katz v. the United States.*

Charles Katz was charged with placing illegal bets in cities across the country from a telephone booth. He was discovered by an electronic listening device placed outside the booth. Katz argued that the listening device violated the Fourth Amendment, by listening in on a conversation he believed to be secure. This time, the Supreme Court ruled that it violated the right to be secure in private.

The true question is what qualifies as unreasonable search. The Supreme Court has ruled that scanning a building with a thermal scanner qualifies as a violation, while law enforcement only must obtain a subpoena in order to access phone records. The reason that they needn’t obtain a warrant is that when a person signs up for phone service, they understand that their calls are going to be tracked due to the need to charge for service. The same could be said with a GPS system, specifically located on a phone.

A GPS system uses your location on Earth to direct you anywhere you wish to go. The GPS bounces signals off satellites in order to determine locations. You are broadcasting your location to anyone with access to those satellites, similar to the way that a network connects phone calls. In this case, the government would need at most a subpoena to access information received from the GPS.

The largest controversy lies with the use of drones. These aerial vehicles can be used to observe private lands from above. Generally, a search is characterized as a quest for information, and by this definition, drones should not be able to do this without a warrant. If, however, it is just performing a routine flight, then there is no problem.

Growing technology has created controversy with many laws. The only thing that the Supreme Court can do is try to set a precedence to keep up with the uncontrollable growth.