

A smart(phone) ruling

Just days ago, the U.S. Supreme Court, in the case of Riley v. California, handed down a monumental decision based upon the Fourth Amendment, which protects citizens' rights to be free from unlawful searches and seizures. The decision certainly also implicated an inherent right to privacy found in both First Amendment and Fourth Amendment protections.

The Supreme Court simply held that the police have no right to search through the data on a smartphone/cellphone after they have arrested someone. The court acknowledged that the information we now keep on our cellphones is of a private character and contains unlimited amounts of information about us, which can be intruded upon only by probable cause shown to a neutral, detached magistrate, who then issues a search warrant.

Since most of us, in essence, carry our lives with us in our smartphones, the Supreme Court noted that the people need these protections. Allowing the police to go through someone's smartphone, upon arrest, in essence would be like allowing the police to know every detail of our life.

I commend the court for understanding that, with this new technology, the law must evolve and continue to protect citizens' rights.

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