

California v. Acevedo [[500 U.S. 565](#) (1991)]. Concluded that searches of containers in automobiles without a warrant were constitutional if probable cause for the search existed.

California v. Greenwood. [[486 U.S. 35](#) (1988)]. "The Fourth Amendment does not prohibit the warrantless search and seizure of garbage left for collection outside the curtilage of a home."

California v. Prysock. [[453 U.S. 355](#) (1981)]. "There is no rigid rule requiring that the content of the warnings to an accused prior to police interrogation required by [Miranda v. Arizona](#) be a virtual incantation of the precise language contained in the Miranda opinion."

Camp (*also* ranch) A type of correctional facility located in a rural area.

Canton v. Harris. [489 U.S. 378 (1989)]. "A municipality may, in certain circumstances, be held liable under 1983 for constitutional violations resulting from its failure to train its employees."

Capacity [Criminal Law]. The mental state of being legally responsible for one's actions.

Capias. [Latin]. "That you take" A general term for various court orders commanding that some person be taken into custody.

Capital Felonies. Felony crimes punishable by death or life imprisonment without parole.

Capital Punishment. Imposition of the death penalty; usually reserved for the most heinous crimes. *See also full article titled [Juvenile Death Penalty](#)*

CAPS [Acronym]. Chicago's Alternative Policing Strategy.

Career Criminals. Offenders who make their living through crime.

Carnal Knowledge. A phrase meaning sexual intercourse.

Carroll v. United States. [[267 U.S. 132](#) (1925)]. *See Carroll Doctrine.*

Carroll Doctrine. Doctrine established in [Carroll v. United States](#) (1925) that established the admissibility of evidence obtained in a warrantless search of an automobile.

Case. 1. An incident investigated by law enforcement. 2. A single matter under the jurisdiction of a particular court.

Case Backlog. *see Backlog*

Case File. The collection of documents concerning a particular investigation.

Case Law. Legal opinions of courts that have the force of law; a primary source of law in the United States and other common law countries.

Cast. [Forensics]. A reproduction of an impression made by pouring a casting material (such as plaster or dental stone) into the impression and allowing it to harden.

Castle Exception. In self defense, the idea that defenders have no need to retreat when attacked in their homes.

Causation. The legal requirement that the harm in a crime is a result of the union of *actus reus* and *mens rea*.

CCA. Corrections Corporation of America. See also the [CCA](#) website.

CDA. Communications Decency Act (1996).

Certification. *see* [Waiver](#)

Certiorari (writ of). A writ issued by a higher court directing a lower court to send the record of a case to the higher court for review.

Chain Gang. In the penal systems of the South, convicts being chained together for outdoor labor.

Chain of Custody. A process where the precise chronological history of evidence is documented from the time of collection until it is presented in court.

Challenge (of jurors). A claim that a potential juror is biased either way toward the defendant. *see also* **challenge for cause** and **preemptory challenge**

Challenge for Cause. Potential jurors can be dismissed from the jury pool on the basis of any obvious bias, such as being a law enforcement officer or an officer of the court. There is usually no limit to the number of jurors who can be *challenged for cause*.

Chambers. The judges office, usually adjacent to the courtroom.

Chancellor. An agent of the king that settled disputes between neighbors on the king's behalf; usually dealing with property and child misconduct issues.

Chancery Court. A court of equity, rooted in English common law, where civil disputes were resolved; also responsible for juvenile and family matters.

Change of Venue. A change in the location of a trial, generally from one county or district to another.

Charge. The formal allegation filed against a defendant in a criminal matter.

Chemical Enhancement. [Forensics]. The use of chemicals that react with particular types of evidence that make them easier to see or easier to photograph.

Chemical Hazard. Chemicals that create a threat of bodily harm if inhaled, ingested, or touched.

Chemiluminescence. [Forensics]. The emission of light as a result of a chemical reaction.

Chief Justice. The presiding or principal judge of a court; usually has some nominal authority over the other judges.

Charge to the Jury. Written instructions about the law applicable to the case at hand which are given to a jury by the judge to help them reach a verdict.

Child Savers. Groups who promoted the rights of juveniles during the 1800s and helped create a separate juvenile system.

Children in Need of Supervision. Incurable children who cannot be supervised adequately by parents; agencies exist in most jurisdictions to find homes for these children.

Chimel v. California [[395 U.S. 752](#) (1969)]. Created the search warrant exception whereby police may search the area within an arrestee's immediate control incidental to an arrest.

Chronic Offender. (*also* habitual offender, persistent offender) A person who commits frequency criminal or delinquent acts.

Chronic Recidivists. Persons who continue to commit new crimes after being convicted of other crimes.

Circuit Courts. Today, these courts hear cases from several counties or districts. In antiquity, judges rode in circuits, or circular paths from location to location to hold court.

Circumstantial Evidence. Information from which a jury must infer a fact; tends to *imply* guilt, but does not *prove* that the defendant is connected to the crime.

Citation. 1. A document issued by either a law enforcement or a court officer commanding a person to appear in court at a specific time. 2. Notation as to where a specific point of law may be found.

Citizen Review Board. Permanent oversight body with the power to conduct inquiries into police misconduct.

Civil Action. Any lawsuit brought to enforce *private* rights and to remedy violations of those rights.

Civil Commitment. Process by which a person found not guilty by reason of insanity in a criminal trial can be confined in a mental institution or else released.

Civil Law. (*also* municipal law). 1. All laws pertaining to non-criminal activities. 2. A family of law that is based on codified laws as opposed to the common law.

Civil Liability. The basis for a cause of action to recover damages (sued for money).

CJA [Acronym | England & Wales]. Criminal Justice Act.

CJIS [Acronym]. Criminal Justice Information Services.

Clandestine Laboratory. A laboratory used in the production of illegal drugs.

Class Action. Any lawsuit on behalf of a group of people who are the victims of whatever wrongs they allege.

Class Characteristics. [Forensics]. Evidence characteristics that place a piece of evidence into a particular class of things but that cannot identify a single thing specifically.

Classical School (of Criminology). Theories of crime causation based on assumptions that criminal behavior is a matter of individuals making free-will choices; the forerunners of modern *rational choice* theories.

CALEA. [Acronym]. Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies. *See also* the [CALEA](#) website.

Clear and Present Danger. Conditions relating to public safety that may validate the use of deadly force by police.

Clearance Rate. Proportion of reported crimes that are determined by be solved by law enforcement.

Clerk of the Court. Person who works directly with a trial judge and who is responsible for court paperwork and records prior to and during the course of a trial.

Coconspirator. A person besides the defendant who is alleged to have committed the same crime in concert with the defendant.

Code. A systematic, written collection of laws.

Code of Hammurabi. The earliest example of a legal code defining crimes. *See full text at* [The Avalon Project](#).

Codefendants. Two or more defendants charged with the same offense, and having the same trail.

CODIS [Acronym]. *See* **Combined DNA Index System**. *See also* the [CODIS](#) website.

Coercion. An affirmative defense similar to duress, where the defendant alleges that he or she was forced to commit an illegal act.

Coitus. Sexual intercourse; carnal knowledge.

Colorado v. Connelly. [[479 U.S. 157](#) (1986)]. When the voluntariness of a confession is questioned, the "defendant's mental condition may be a significant factor in the voluntariness calculus... [T]his does not justify a conclusion that his mental condition, by itself and apart from its relation to official coercion, should ever dispose of the inquiry into constitutional voluntariness."

Colorado v. Spring [[479 U.S. 564](#) (1987)]. Police interrogations where the defendant thinks they are being charged with a less serious crime are allowable.

Combined DNA Index System. See the [CODIS](#) website.

Combustion. [Forensics]. Burning. The process where a material is consumed by its reaction with oxygen; intense heat and light are common byproducts of such reactions.

Common Law. Law based on court decisions that recognize and enforce the customs of a people; often used merely as a synonym for *case law* today. See full article titled [Origins of the Common Law](#)

Common Law Crimes. Crimes originating in the English common law.

Common Law Jurisdictions. Jurisdictions that still recognize the common law as valid.

Communications Decency Act.

Community Corrections. Treatment programs designed to promote the successful reintegration of offenders into the community.

Community Oriented Policing Services. "... the mission of the COPS Office [within the Justice Department] is to advance community policing in jurisdictions of all sizes across the country." See the [COPS](#) website.

Community Police Officer Program (CPOP). A New York City community policing initiative.

Community Policing. A philosophy of policing based on community partnerships that focus on crime prevention, quality of life, and public order.

Community Service. An alternative sanction that requires offenders to work in the community (generally in service of the public) rather than incarceration.

Commutation of Sentence. A reduction in the severity or length of a convict's sentence, often from death to life in prison; usually issued by state governors.

Comparative Analysis. [Forensics]. The process where a **questioned source** (physical evidence) is compared with a **known source** to determine if the two have a common origin.

Comparison Standard. [Forensics]. Material collected from a known source to be used in **comparative analysis**.

Competent to Stand Trial. To satisfy this legal requirement, defendants must be able to understand the charges against them and aid their attorneys in their defense.

Complaint. A written statement of the facts and circumstances necessary to show the alleged offense occurred, sworn under oath before a judge or other court officer.

Complicity (Doctrine of). Principle of criminal liability that establishes the circumstances under which more than one person incurs criminal liability before, during, and after the commission of crimes. *See also* **Accessory**, **Accomplices**, and **Vicarious Liability**.

Comprehensive Crime Control Act of 1984. An act that authorized the establishment of the U.S. Sentencing Commission, instituted sentencing guidelines, abolished federal parole, and created new guidelines and goals for federal corrections.

Computer Crime. *See full article titled [Computer Crime](#).*

Conclusive Evidence. Evidence that is so compelling that it cannot be disputed or discounted; establishes guilt beyond a reasonable doubt.

Concurrent Jurisdiction. Situation where a defendant can be charged in two or more jurisdictions at once.

Concurring opinion. A judge's written opinion wherein he or she agrees with the finding of the majority but disagrees with their rationale.

Conditional Release. An alternative to bail whereby a defendant is released from custody if he or she agrees to a number of court ordered terms and conditions.

Conditions of Confinement. The characteristics of prison or jail confinement, such as heat and humidity, that are often used as grounds for legal action by inmates.

Conflict Theory. Criminological theories based on assumptions that the sources of criminal behavior are class conflict and social inequality; based on the writings of Marx.

Confidentiality. [Law]. Any privileged communication between a lawyer and client.

Connecticut v. Barrett [[479 U.S. 523](#) (1987)]. An oral confession is admissible even if the defendant refuses to sign a written statement.

Consent Decree. A formal agreement between the juvenile court, the child, and the child's parents where the child is placed under the supervision of the court without an adjudication of delinquency.

Consent Defense. A rarely allowable criminal defense whereby the defendant claims that there is no criminal liability because the prohibited harm was done with the permission of the victim. Because the consent issue is elemental to the crimes, crimes such as rape and sexual assault provide for a valid consent defense.

Consent Search. A person may waive his or her constitutional rights under the Fourth Amendment and consent to a search; to be valid, the consent must be voluntary and free of duress.

Consequentialism. *See* entry for the [Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy](#).

Conspiracy. Criminal act that requires no act other than communication.

Constitutional Law. An area of law that deals with the constitution and constitutional amendments, as well as the court cases that have interpreted them.

Constitutional Rights. Freedoms granted to all Americans by the U.S. Constitution and its amendments.

Constructive Breaking. In the law of burglary, entering a structure in an unusual way.

Constructive Intent. The actor did not intend the harm, but should have known that his or her actions created a high risk of injury.

Containment Theory. Theory developed by Walter Reckless which holds that people are deterred from criminal behavior because of the influences on them by both internal psychological and external social forces.

Contamination. [Forensics]. The unwanted transfer of material to a piece of physical evidence.

Contempt of Court. Disobeying the orders of a judge or failing to behave properly during court proceedings.

Control Sample. [Forensics]. A sample of material taken from the area around where physical evidence is gathered; used to determine the effect of the substances in the environment of the evidence on the forensic testing process.

Conversion. The illegal use of another's property.

Conviction. Being judged guilty of a crime in a court of law.

Coordinate Measuring System. [Forensics]. A measurement system that requires measurements from two walls that abut each other at a ninety degree angle.

COPS [Acronym]. *See* **Community Oriented Policing Services**

Corporal Punishment. A form of punishment where bodily pain is inflicted.

Corpus Delicti. Sufficient evidence to reasonably believe a crime has occurred.

Corroboration. Evidence that tends to strengthen that already given. *See also* **Evidence.**

Cortex. [Forensics]. With hair evidence, the middle layer of hair that contains pigments that give the hair its characteristic color.

Cost-benefit Analysis. A method of analyzing the cost associated with a particular policy or behavior and determining if the benefits outweigh the costs. *see also* **Criminal Calculus.**

Counterterrorism. Efforts to stop and responses to terrorism.

County of Riverside v. McLaughlin [500 U.S. 44 (1991)]. "In order to satisfy [Gerstein's](#) promptness requirement, a jurisdiction that chooses to combine probable cause determinations with other pretrial proceedings must do so as soon as is reasonably feasible, but in no event later than 48 hours after arrest."

Court-appointed Counsel. Lawyers who are appointed by the courts to represent indigent offenders.

Court Calendar (*also* Docket). the schedule of events for a particular court.

Court Clerk. *See* **Clerk of the Court.**

Court Docket. *See* [Docket](#).

Court of General Jurisdiction. Any court having the power to hear both civil and criminal cases.

Court of Last Resort. the last court that may hear an appeal; often the Supreme Court of a given state or the United States.

Court of Record. Any legal proceedings where a written record of dialogue in the courtroom is kept.

Court Order. Any judicial directive authorizing an officer to act on behalf of the court.

Court Reporter. Court official who keeps a word-for-word record of court proceedings.

Courtroom Workgroup. The adversarial and neutral parties who work together to resolve cases.

CPO [Acronym]. Certified Protection Officer.

CPOP [Acronym]. *See* **Community Police Officer Program**.

CPP [Acronym]. Certified Protection Professional.

CPTED [Acronym]. *See* **Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design**.

Crime. Any act or omission prohibited by law.

Crime Bill of 1994. Legislation supported by President Clinton that aimed at putting more police officers on the streets and established truth in sentencing laws.

Crime Clock. A crime data presentation strategy used by the FBI that reports how often crimes occur. *See the [2002 Crime Clock](#) at the [National Center for Victims of Crime](#).*

Crime Control Model. Model of the criminal justice system that emphasizes fighting crime and protecting people from crime.

Crime Prevention. Any activity performed by individuals or groups with the intent to prevent others from committing criminal acts.

Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED). Theory that crime can be prevented through the physical design features of places.

Crimes of Omission. Crimes resulting from a failure to act when required to do so by law.

Criminal History. A person's prior convictions, indictments, and arrests.

Criminal Homicides. Homicides that are neither justified or excused.

Criminalistics. The professional discipline involved in the collection, examination, interpretation and individualization of physical evidence found at crime scenes.

Criminalization. The transformation of a civil proceeding into a criminal one.

Criminal Justice. The study of the persons and processes involved in a system of justice as well as the laws and policies that shape the consequences and administration of those processes.

Criminal Personality. Theories from psychology that identify personality characteristics as the cause of crime and delinquency.

Criminology. The social scientific body of knowledge which attempts to explain criminality and develop crime science.

Cross-contamination. [Forensics]. The transfer of material between two or more pieces of physical evidence.

Cross-examination. Questioning of one side's witness by the other side.

Cruel and Unusual Punishment. Unconstitutional ([Amendment Eight](#)) punishments that are disproportionately severe for the crime committed.

Crystal Violet. [Forensics]. Also called Gentian violet. A stain for latent fingerprint development that is used on impressions left in adhesives, such as the sticky side of adhesive tapes.

CSA [Acronym]. Controlled Substance Act (1970)

Culpable. The state of mind of a person who has committed an act that makes them liable for prosecution for that act.

Culpability. Blameworthiness; deserving punishment because of responsibility for an act.

Cultural Deviance Theory. Theories of criminality based on the assumption that criminal behavior is learned through interaction with deviant subcultures within society.

Curtilage. The area immediately surrounding the home. *See* Edward M. Hendrie's article in the April 1998 [FBI Law Enforcement Bulletin](#) entitled "[Curtilage: The Expectation of Privacy in the Back Yard.](#)" [PDF]

Custodial Dispositions. Juvenile court outcome that results in some type of custody, either secure or nonsecure.

Cuticle. [Forensics]. With hair evidence, the outer layer of the hair which is composed of overlapping scales.

Cyanoacrylate. [Forensics]. Also known as Superglue. The vapors of this chemical react with the moisture found in latent fingerprints, forming a hard plastic-like substance that can be photographed or further enhanced.

Cybercrime. The use of any computer network for crime.

Cyberporn. Pornography based in the Internet.

Cyberterrorism. The use of the Internet to facilitate terrorist crimes.