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**CONSTITUTIONAL
INTERPRETATION**

PHIL 102

Ethics, Politics, & Law

Lecture Two

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A MYSTERIOUS SIGN

PRIVATE MEMBERS ONLY

- Faculty Club
- What does it mean?

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EVIDENCE FOR READING OF A TEXT

- e₁. The “text” is on a sign.**
- e₂. The sign is on a door.**
- e₃. The door is to the Johns Hopkins University Club.**
- e₄. The “text” reads “PRIVATE MEMBERS ONLY.”**

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POSSIBLE EXPLANATIONS

- t₀. Only those persons who belong to this club may enter it.**
- t₁. Only those who are secretly and not publicly members of this club may enter it.**
- t₂. Only the genitalia of members may enter.**
- t₃. You may bring in your own genitalia.**
- t₄. Only genitalia may enter.**
- t₅. The sign was intentionally designed with double meaning by witty intellectuals.**

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THE CONSTITUTION

- **History**
- **Written document**
- **Interpretive theories**
 - Plain meaning
 - Originalism
 - Concrete intentions
 - Abstract intentions
 - Non-originalism

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CONSTITUTIONAL PRECEDENT

- **The common law**
- ***Stare decisis***
 - Vertical *stare decisis*
 - Horizontal *stare decisis*
- **Establishing precedent**
- **Overturning precedent**

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SOME IMPORTANT CASES

- *Griswold v. Connecticut*
- *Brown v. Board of Education*
- *Roe v. Wade*
- *Casey v. Planned Parenthood*
- Unnamed right to die case
- *New Jersey v. T.L.O.*
- *Bowers v. Hardwick*
- *Lawrence v. Texas*
- *Loving v. Virginia*
- Unnamed gay marriage case

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