



Reasonable or Unreasonable Search – Case Studies¹

- 1) An elderly woman leaves a restaurant and is followed by the owner who has accused her of stealing silverware. A nearby male police officer notices the dispute and frisks the elderly woman in search of the stolen goods. No silverware is found.
- 2) A student tells his friends that an Arabic student whom he frequently bullies, is a terrorist and probably has guns in his backpack. This rumour eventually reaches the principal who then proceeds to search the student's backpack in the school cafeteria during lunch hour.
- 3) A customs inspector randomly selects passengers waiting to board an airplane and asks them to remove their shoes and open their carry-on luggage for inspection prior to boarding.
- 4) A reliable student informs the principal that she witnessed a bag of marijuana fall out of her classmate's locker. The principal discretely calls the suspected student to the office, explains the situation and searches her locker with the assistance of the vice principal. The student is then suspended from school.
- 5) A police officer pulls over a driver for making an illegal left turn. While writing the ticket, the officer catches a scent of marijuana in the car. The officer proceeds to search the car's entire contents and finds a bag of marijuana in the glove compartment.

¹ Case Studies courtesy of Charter in the Classroom: Students, Teachers and Rights (CC: STAR)