

## WAR or JUST POLITICS?

Listen to the ROOM 2B podcast **WAR OR JUST POLITICS** at mrreview.org and complete the following exercise. Be prepared to discuss with your classmates.

1. Explain what is meant by the “culture war” in contemporary American politics.
2. Explain how the following issues have influenced policy-making in our culture war:  
  
Abortion  
Homosexuality  
Feminism  
Multiculturalism
3. Review Federalist 10. Why did James Madison advocate for pluralism? How might it be better for our politics to speak of pluralism rather than a “culture war”? How important are the words we use inside the political marketplace?

4. Complete the **PRACTICE SCOTUS COMPARISON QUESTION** below:

*Gonzales v. Raich* (2005), In 1996 California voters passed the Compassionate Use Act, legalizing marijuana for medical use. California’s law conflicted with the federal Controlled Substances Act (CSA), which banned possession of marijuana. After the Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA) seized doctor-prescribed marijuana from a patient’s home, a group of medical marijuana users sued the DEA and U.S. Attorney General Alberto Gonzales in federal district court.

The medical marijuana users argued the Compassionate Use Act exceeded Congress’ constitutional power. But the majority of the Supreme Court ruled that Congress did not exceed its constitutional power with its Controlled Substances Act. Justice John Paul Stevens argued that the Constitution gave Congress the authority to prohibit local cultivation and use of marijuana despite state laws to the contrary. Stevens argued that the Supreme Court’s precedent “firmly established” Congress’ power to regulate purely local economic activities that could be part of a national market.

(Adapted from Oyez.org)

- A. Identify a clause of the U.S. Constitution interpreted by the Supreme Court in both *Gonzales v. Raich* (2005) and *U.S. v. Lopez* (1995) to determine whether state governments or the national government had authority over local economic activities.
- B. Based on the constitutional clause identified in part A, explain how the facts of *Gonzales v. Raich* (2005) led to a different Supreme Court holding as the holding in *U.S. v. Lopez* (1995.)
- C. Explain how some states have changed their marijuana policies since the Supreme Court’s holding in *Gonzales v. Raich* (2005.)