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Seth Barrett Tillman



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# **Semantic Originalism**

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## SEMANTIC ORIGINALISM

LAWRENCE B. SOLUM

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# SEMANTIC ORIGINALISM<sup>\*</sup>

LAWRENCE B. SOLUM<sup>\*\*</sup>

## I. INTRODUCTION: ORIGINALISM, MEANING, AND THE LAW

What does the Constitution mean? The United States Supreme Court has recently suggested that interpretations of the constitutional text are “guided by the principle that “[t]he Constitution was written to be understood by the voters; its words and phrases were used in their normal and ordinary as distinguished from technical meaning.”<sup>1</sup> The approach to constitutional

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<sup>1</sup> District of Columbia v. Heller, \_\_\_\_ S.Ct. \_\_\_\_, 2008 WL 2520816 (June 26, 2008) (citations omitted).