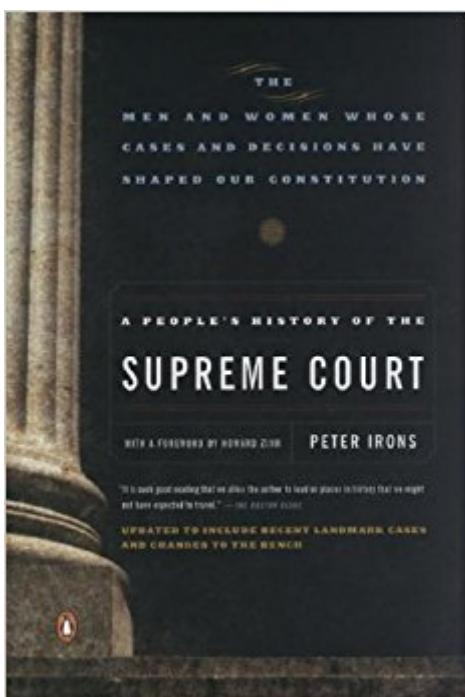


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A People's History Of The Supreme Court: The Men And Women Whose Cases And Decisions Have Shaped Our Constitution: Revised Edition



Synopsis

Recent changes in the Supreme Court have placed the venerable institution at the forefront of current affairs, making this comprehensive and engaging work as timely as ever. In the tradition of Howard Zinn's classic *A People's History of the United States*, Peter Irons chronicles the decisions that have influenced virtually every aspect of our society, from the debates over judicial power to controversial rulings in the past regarding slavery, racial segregation, and abortion, as well as more current cases about school prayer, the Bush/Gore election results, and "enemy combatants." A comprehensive history of the people and cases that have changed history, this is the definitive account of the nation's highest court.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

I am struggling with my reactions to this book. I have several serious criticisms of the book, but I think many things were well done. Let me first list the positives and then all the negatives. *A People's History of the Supreme Court* gives a brief biography of every justice who has ever served on the Supreme Court and interwoven with this, gives a description of some of the most important cases the Supreme Court has decided. In the case descriptions, the author explains, in plain language, the legal issues involved (I think it's plain language, but I'm a lawyer, and law school is very good at teaching lawyers not to speak or understand plain language). He also often describes the history of the legal issue, why it was important to the nation, what the country thought of the legal issue at the time. Finally, he gives a brief story of the actual case itself--who the parties were, why they decided to file the suit, why they appealed their case all the way to the Supreme Court, etc. This is all very

important stuff. It is great to have it all collected into one book. Too often, we don't know anything about the people who bring their cases to the Supreme Court but merely know their names. It is important to remember that the cases involved real people with real disputes or heartfelt issues that they wanted the court to resolve. We also know almost nothing about the Supreme Court justices who preceded this one. But they are, in many ways, as powerful or more powerful than the Presidents. They had real-world experience before becoming judges and sometimes cast aside that experience, but sometimes didn't. I found the book extremely interesting and read it quickly from cover to cover. But the book had many flaws: there are factual errors.

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