



The Supreme Court and American Democracy: Case Studies on Judicial Review and Public Policy

Earl Pollock

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There is almost no political question in the United States, wrote Alexis de Tocqueville, that is not resolved sooner or later into a judicial question. The U.S. Supreme Court is the ultimate arbiter of judicial questions, weighing the laws enacted by the people's representatives against the inviolable fundamental law embodied in the U.S. Constitution. Virtually every vital political and social issue comes before the Court: abortion, affirmative action, capital punishment, elections and voting, gay rights, gun control, separation of church and state, and more. This book presents living law, the case-by-case shaping of the law on each of these controversial issues, in the justices' own words and with informative commentary.

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; Guide to the Court's functions and the ways in which it goes about its work

; Topically organized sequences of cases through which the law on particular issues evolved, including the facts of each case; the specific issues before the Court; the Court's decision, embodied in the text of the majority opinion; an account of all opinions handed down; and excerpts from the most influential concurrences and dissents

; Commentary summarizing current federal law on each of the controversial topics covered, with notes on the historical background and in some cases the turbulent aftermath of the Court's decisions

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