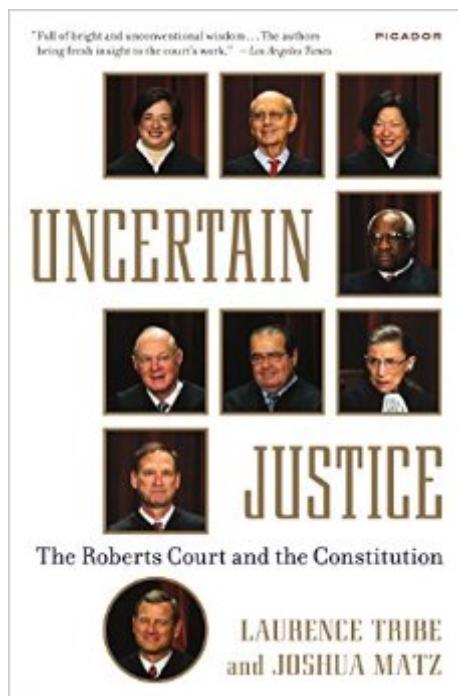


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Uncertain Justice: The Roberts Court And The Constitution



Synopsis

"Irresistible...A brilliantly layered account of the Roberts Court filled with memorable stories...This book is a joy to read from start to finish."-Doris Kearns Goodwin, author of Team of Rivals and The Bully PulpitFrom Citizens United to its momentous rulings regarding Obamacare and gay marriage, the Supreme Court under Chief Justice John Roberts has profoundly affected American life. Yet the court remains a mysterious institution, and the motivations of the nine men and women who serve for life are often obscure. Now, in Uncertain Justice, Laurence Tribe and Joshua Matz show the surprising extent to which the Roberts Court is revising the meaning of our Constitution. This essential book arrives at a make-or-break moment for the nation and the court, and the court's decisions on key topics-including free speech, privacy, voting rights, and presidential power-could be uniquely durable. Tribe, one of the country's leading constitutional lawyers, and Matz dig deeply into the court's rulings to deliver original insights and compelling human stories. In the end, Uncertain Justice illuminates the most colorful story of all-how the Supreme Court and the Constitution frame the way we live.

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Customer Reviews

This delightful, generous, jargon-free book treats controversy with clarity: selects key facts to outline the issues, paints three-dimensional portraits, not caricatures, of the justices, and ventures confidently into legal thickets, so those in the know will recognize the signposts, but newcomers won't be detoured or get lost. The writers' erudition, craft, and civic virtue lifts their work above most popular books about the law. Their work has the briskness but not the glibness of Malcolm Gladwell,

the twin respect for the reader and the subject of Steven Jay Gould. It surprised me but made sense to learn that Scalia is more traditionalist than originalist, Breyer more technocrat than liberal, Kagan more cautious than activist. But the focus of the book is on rulings, not personalities, and here the writers function at their peak. I raced through the passages that describe the novel and narrow definition of corruption that justifies Citizens United, the three-century patchwork of sources that supports the court's changed view of the 2nd Amendment, the libertarian faith in structural safeguards as guarantors of individual rights. The book explains exactly what all this means with elegance and fairness. Those of us who consider the Roberts court lawless might wish the book focused more on precedent: how brazen it is, for example, in Citizens United to overturn a century of law in a 5-4 decision based on newly-minted theory; or acknowledged recent research that demonstrates the decisive role of personal prejudice in rulings by Republican-appointed judges. The day I write this, June 16, 2014, the New York Times has published a study showing they are far more likely to rule in favor of women's rights if they themselves have daughters.

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