Supreme Conflict: The Inside Story Of The Struggle For Control Of The United States Supreme Court
Synopsis

Drawing on unprecedented access to the Supreme Court justices themselves and their inner circles, acclaimed ABC News legal correspondent Jan Crawford Greenburg offers an explosive newsbreaking account of one of the most momentous political watersheds in American history. From the series of Republican nominations that proved deeply frustrating to conservatives to the decades of bruising battles that led to the rise of Justices Roberts and Alito, this is the authoritative story of the conservative effort to shift the direction of the high court—a revelatory look at one of the central fronts of America’s culture wars by one of the most widely respected experts on the subject.

Book Information

Paperback: 384 pages
Publisher: Penguin Books; Reprint edition (January 29, 2008)
Language: English
ISBN-10: 0143113046
Product Dimensions: 5.5 x 8.4 x 0.8 inches
Shipping Weight: 12.6 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)
Average Customer Review: 3.8 out of 5 stars See all reviews (80 customer reviews)

Customer Reviews

This is just a terrific book on the recent Supreme Court. The author, a graduate of the University of Chicago Law School, currently is a correspondent for ABC News, and for many years covered the Court for the Chicago Tribune. The author develops a dual focus in her analysis. First, she looks at how certain key Justices were selected for nomination to the Court. Those Justices include Souter, Kennedy, Thomas, O’Connor, Scalia, Miers, Roberts and Alito. She also covers the Bork nomination. Particularly interesting in this regard, and the "struggle for control" of the Court she sees continually occurring, is the conservative paranoia that true believer conservatives only must be nominated by GOP Presidents, individuals who will unlike Souter, Blackmun, Kennedy, and O’Connor for example, never deviate from a firm conservative outlook no matter what seductive influences (such as the New York Times and the Georgetown cocktail circuit)impact upon them. The
author well documents that the Federalist Society and other judicial conservative groups felt
themselves continually betrayed as one after another Justice moved to a more moderate position
despite having appeared to be a firmly-fixed Scalia/Thomas type conservative. The internal struggle
in GOP White Houses with these groups and the process of selection itself are superbly discussed,
based primarily it appears upon the author’s extensive interviewing, the Blackmun papers, and
documentation at various Presidential libraries (especially the Reagan facility). The second focus of
the book is equally fascinating. Here the author analyzes the struggle within the Court for
dominance, the process of coalition building, the strategies of inter-Justice persuasion, and the role
of Justice personality in the mix.

Jan Crawford Greenburg traces the history of conservatives to re-shape the court beginning with
President Reagan and moving through the confirmation of Justice Alito. The author obviously had
access to a number of sources as well as the notes of Justice Blackmun. She is able to tell a
complete narrative both inside the Supreme Court and inside the White House as candidates for
nomination to the bench are debated, prepared, etc. She devotes more space to conservative
administrations and justices but this seems due to the nature of the narrative she is attempting to
construct rather than an attempt to slight anyone. This book methodically traces the successes and
failures of the nomination process. There were enough contentious and controversial proceedings
to provide plenty of grist for the mill and plenty of behind the scenes details that display the thought
processes going into each nomination. There is also a nice level of background information on the
nominee so that you begin to see them as real people, and not just the shallow caricatures that the
media typically portrays. Some may be disappointed by a relative lack of detail in the Clarence
Thomas confirmation hearings but I would say she hit it just about right. That widely publicized mess
could fill an entire book and is not central to the story she is attempting to tell. She discusses it
enough to make clear what a firestorm it was and then moves on. Once each person makes it onto
the court, she walks us through the impact that they had on the group dynamic. One of the most
fascinating aspects of the book is how one justice may affect another to change that group dynamic.
Once again, we are presented with justices as human beings with normal thoughts and emotions.

Download to continue reading...

Supreme Conflict: The Inside Story of the Struggle for Control of the United States Supreme Court
Ecuador and the United States: Useful Strangers (United States and the Americas) (United States
and the Americas) (The United States and the Americas) Landmark Supreme Court Cases: The
Most Influential Decisions of the Supreme Court of the United States Scott 1998 Specialized