

Class Name: How Past Supreme Court Decisions Continue to Impact Our Lives

Class Day/Time: Thursdays, 10:45 a.m. – 12:15 p.m.

Location: Maryland Parkway MAB2

Instructors' Names: Dorothy Howard, Tony Kouffman

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Course Overview – Spring Semester:

We saw last semester how the decisions of the United States Supreme Court have profoundly shaped our law and our society. This semester we'll continue our discussion, beginning with the rise of Thurgood Marshall and the landmark civil rights cases of the Warren court. We'll conclude with the major cases of the latter 20th century and a brief look at recent landmark cases. As before, under the guidance of Professor Peter Irons and the Great Courses lecture series the course will examine these decisions as seen by the parties on both sides, the justices involved and the political and social contexts that affected the Court's rulings. We will discuss the Court's decisions on civil rights issues, Jim Crow schools, the Vietnam War and the Burger and Rehnquist desire to reverse many of the Warren court's "activist" decisions in criminal law and First Amendment issues. We'll conclude with a look at the Court's impact on American law and society over the past two centuries.

The Constitutional Convention to World War I

Class 1	February 5	Opening Reminders Thurgood Marshall-Lawyer and Justice Five Jim Crow Schools and Five Cases
Class 2	February 12	The Hearts and Minds of Black Children War Against the Constitution

Class 3 February 19 Earl Warren - Politician to Chief Justice
"We Beg Thy Blessings"

No Class February 26, No Class – Instructor out of Town
March 5
March 12

Spring Break March 16-21 No Class

Class 4 March 26 "You Have the Right to Remain Silent"
The Warren Court Reshapes the Constitution
Earl Warren Leaves, Warren Burger Arrives

Class 5 April 2 "A Right to Privacy"
From Abortion to Watergate
The Court Faces Affirmative Action

Class 6 April 9 Down from the Pedestal, Out of the Closet
Burning Flags and Burning Crosses
Prayer and Abortion Return to the Court

Class 7 April 16 One Vote Decides Two Crucial Cases
Some Landmark Cases since 2003
Looking Back and Looking Ahead

Suggested Readings:

A People's History of the Supreme Court (1999) by Peter Irons

The Great Justices, 1941-54: Black, Douglas, Frankfurter, and Jackson in Chambers
(2006) by William Domnarski

The Brethren: Inside the Supreme Court (1979) by Bob Woodward and Scott
Armstrong.

A Mere Machine: The Supreme Court, Congress and American Democracy (2013)
by Anna Harvey