



Making Our Democracy Work: A Judge's View

By Stephen Breyer

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In this groundbreaking book, Justice Stephen Breyer tackles these questions and more, offering an original approach to interpreting the Constitution that judges, lawyers, and scholars will look to for many years to come.

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Making Our Democracy Work: A Judge's View By Stephen Breyer Bibliography

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

Starred Review. Justice Breyer (*Active Liberty*) looks at how the Supreme Court evolved historically and defined its role largely in relation to the willingness of the public to embrace its decisions. Readers may be surprised to learn that in many democracies, parliaments are not bound to accept decisions by their court; similarly, the U.S. Constitution doesn't give the Supreme Court final say. Breyer tells the story of President Jackson's grudging acceptance of a Court decision protecting the treaty rights of the Cherokee nation, only to seize their land using Federal troops. In the Dred Scott decision, the pro-slavery Court violated the right of Free states to outlaw slavery. And in *Brown vs. the Kansas Board of Education*, President Eisenhower used the Army to back up Court decisions against segregated education. Breyer discusses recent Court decisions in favor of rights for Guantanamo detainees and examines the limitations of a President's power as Commander-in-Chief, even in wartime, contrasting this to the failure of the Court, Congress, and President Roosevelt over internment camps during WWII. An accomplished writer, Justice Breyer's absorbing stories offer insight into how a democracy works, and sometimes fails. (Sept.)

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From [Booklist](#)

Justice Breyer was appointed to the Supreme Court in 1994 (and, of course, he serves for life, as mandated by the Constitution). His book partners well with Jeffrey Toobin's well-received *The Nine* (2007), which is an account of the politics and personalities of the current Supreme Court. Breyer projects a larger context, supplying both historical and judicial background to give the nonspecialist a generalized picture of how the Supreme Court works. He explains the Court's role in ensuring a workable democracy, in guaranteeing that the Constitution works in practice and in the real world. Certainly an interesting aspect of this greatly informative book is Breyer's look back over the history of the republic to see how the public—and even the U.S. president—has accepted Court decisions. (It is not readily imaginable, to be sure, but, nevertheless, it is dramatically illustrated here that such acceptance was a principle that was not easy to plant within social and political consciousnesses.) Breyer is emphatic that “at the end of the day, the public’s confidence is what permits the Court to ensure a Constitution that is more than words on paper.” A book for all citizens. --Brad Hooper

Review

“A brave book. . . . Deeply thoughtful. . . . An argument for the ages. . . . A clarion call to future generations. . . . Breyer’s goal is for the system to work, to solve problems, to improve our national life.”

—*The New York Times Book Review*

“The most honest discussion of what a judge should do that you will ever find, all the more remarkable because it is written by a sitting Supreme Court justice.”

—*The Washington Post*

“Breyer’s thoughtful book draws readers into the court. . . . It extends his public ruminations with what are becoming his hallmarks: wisdom, modesty, incisiveness.”

—*Los Angeles Times*

“Vivid and full of surprising details. . . . Exemplifies an idealism about what is possible in a democratic citizenry, and an optimism about it, that is as impressive as it is rare on the Supreme Court. . . . Very

admirable.”

—*The New Republic*

“A calm, reasoned book about how the Supreme Court should do its work and how, in history, it has sometimes failed the challenge. . . . A remarkable contribution to educating the public about our constitutional system.”

—*The New York Review of Books*

“A users’ guide to both the Constitution and the Supreme Court. . . . You will find perhaps the best five-page description ever produced of how the Supreme Court works.”

—*The Boston Globe*

“In terms of showing how U.S. Supreme Court justices grapple with important issues, Breyer has made a significant contribution. . . . A perfect book for the law school graduate who wants a refresher in constitutional law—from why the court assumes the power to strike down a statute to how the court can correct itself when it makes bad decisions.”

—*San Francisco Chronicle*

“A full account of [Breyer’s] judicial philosophy, one that allows the federal government wide latitude in addressing society’s problems.”

—Jeffrey Toobin, *The New Yorker*

“A great read. . . . At a moment in which most of us talk about the Constitution in tones of rage and betrayal, Breyer’s optimism, modesty, and scholarly passion are welcome change. *Making Our Democracy Work* is an invitation to a much more civilized and nuanced conversation about the relationship between Americans, their government, and their freedom.”

—*Slate*

“A multidimensional approach to dissecting constitutional questions.”

—*The Philadelphia Inquirer*

“Breyer tells us how the law works, and how it should work. . . . [*Making Our Democracy Work*] provides an understanding of the people who sit in judgment on our highest court, and what moves them.”

—*The Star-Ledger* (Newark)

“An accomplished writer, Justice Breyer’s absorbing stories offer insight into how a democracy works, and sometimes fails.”

—*Publishers Weekly* (starred review)

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Kim Scott:

Reading a e-book can be one of a lot of action that everyone in the world enjoys. Do you like reading book therefore. There are a lot of reasons why people enjoy it. First reading a reserve will give you a lot of new info. When you read a publication you will get new information mainly because book is one of many ways to share the information or maybe their idea. Second, reading a book will make you more imaginative. When

you looking at a book especially tale fantasy book the author will bring you to definitely imagine the story how the people do it anything. Third, you are able to share your knowledge to other people. When you read this *Making Our Democracy Work: A Judge's View*, you can tell your family, friends as well as soon about yours publication. Your knowledge can inspire different ones, make them reading a guide.

Marni Elliott:

The book untitled *Making Our Democracy Work: A Judge's View* contain a lot of information on it. The writer explains the girl idea with easy means. The language is very easy to understand all the people, so do certainly not worry, you can easy to read this. The book was written by famous author. The author gives you in the new time of literary works. You can actually read this book because you can keep reading your smart phone, or device, so you can read the book with anywhere and anytime. If you want to buy the e-book, you can open their official web-site in addition to order it. Have a nice examine.

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Staci Luton:

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