



COURTS, JUDGES, & POLITICS

An Introduction to the Judicial Process **SIXTH EDITION**

Walter F. Murphy | C. Herman Pritchett | Lee Epstein | Jack Knight

Courts, Judges, & Politics

AN INTRODUCTION TO THE JUDICIAL PROCESS

SIXTH EDITION

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Higher Education

COURTS, JUDGES, AND POLITICS: AN INTRODUCTION TO THE JUDICIAL PROCESS

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For Herman and Marguerite Pritchett, in memoriam.

Preface to the Sixth Edition

This book had its origin during the academic year 1956–1957, when I was writing my dissertation at the University of Chicago and serving as C. Herman Pritchett's research assistant. He mentioned in a casual (and, as it turned out, also causal) conversation, probably generated by my having recently read Jack W. Peltason's *The Federal Courts in the Political Process* (New York: Random House, 1955), that he would love to teach a course on the politics of the judicial process, but the materials were too scattered even for a graduate seminar.¹ Because my dissertation was proceeding rapidly, I had begun to think not only of my next project but how my scholarship would develop over the next decades. Thus my application for a fellowship from the Brookings Institution detailed a project for the following year (the uses of *stare decisis*) and explained how it would fit with plans for a series of books and articles. That scheme closely resembled the table of contents of the first edition of *Courts, Judges, & Politics*.

The year at Brookings provided the opportunity not only to revise my dissertation and get most chapters published in law reviews and journals of political science but also to spend mornings in the Library of Congress or the library of the Supreme Court seeking out materials for a text on the judicial process. (Afternoons were often taken up with attending oral arguments.) By the time I came to Princeton in the late summer of 1958, I had filled in many readings to fit my earlier outline. Then I mustered the courage to invite Herman (who was

¹Henry M. Hart, Jr., and Albert M. Sachs's *The Legal Process* did not come out in its mimeographed form (labeled "tentative edition") until 1958; it did not come out as a book in "normal" form until Foundation Press published a much revised edition in 1994, edited by William N. Eskridge, Jr., and Philip P. Frickey. For an evaluation of the impact of this very important "book," see Anthony J. Sebok, *Legal Positivism in American Jurisprudence* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998). Carl A. Auerbach, Lloyd K. Garrison, Willard Hurst, and Samuel Mermin's *The Legal Process: An Introduction to Decision Making by Judicial, Legislative, Executive, and Administrative Agencies* was available only in multilith form, and we were not aware of its existence. It was published in 1961 by Chandler Publishing Co. of San Francisco.

still, in good Chicago style, "Mr. Pritchett"²) to join. He readily agreed and provided three necessary gifts: superb judgment about what would and would not be intelligible to students, money to photocopy the materials we agreed on, and a professional reputation for excellence that attracted Random House's editor, Charles Lieber.

During the next two years, we both tried out many of the materials on our students, and by the summer of 1960 we were able to send the manuscript off to the publisher. That edition was more mine than Herman's, though having studied under and worked for him I am certain that he influenced every thing I have written. (Were he alive, he might insist on certain exceptions to that statement.) The second edition represented pretty much equal labor. The third and fourth editions, however, were much more Herman's than mine. My interests had moved to constitutional theory and to comparative politics; in fact, I taught a course on the judicial process only once after the first edition appeared. Although I continued to teach constitutional interpretation, I did so as a form of political jurisprudence rather than as a course in traditional constitutional law. Still, the two of us arrived at a productive arrangement: Herman did the work and I carped.

Alas, Herman died in 1995, as we, under prodding from McGraw-Hill, who had bought Random House's college list, were thinking of how to organize a fifth edition. My own health did not allow me to do the revisions alone. When, in 1958, I initially approached Herman about coauthoring/coediting the first edition, I had read almost every directly relevant article and book published in the preceding three decades. By 1995, the field had burgeoned so that I would have had to spend at least a year, probably two, just to catch up. I decided to wait and hope that McGraw-Hill would forget about the book. Happily, Bert Lummus and his successors, especially Monica Eckman, had long and stubborn memories. The only escape was to undertake the task of revising and to do so in a way that would minimize my burdens. I talked to Sotirios A. Barber of Notre Dame, an old friend with whom I had worked on another project.³ The two of us sputtered around for almost a year, outdoing each other in producing excuses. Finally, it became clear to both of us that, if the book were going to be re-born, it needed a fresh mind. I then consulted another old friend, Harry P. Stumpf, who had retired from the University of New Mexico in 1995. He knew almost everyone in the field, what each had written, and was willing to share that knowledge as well as his judgments about people and their work. Our discussions convinced both of us that the ideal person was Lee Epstein, the Mallinckrodt Distinguished University Professor of Political Science and Professor of Law at Washington University. Her then-recent publication (with

²At the University of Chicago of the 1950s, graduate students addressed a member of the faculty as "Mister" not "Professor." (There were then no women teaching the Department of Political Science.) After a few months of collaboration, "Mr. Pritchett" sent me a note saying that "someone named Herman" was answering my mail.

³Walter F. Murphy, James E. Fleming, Sotirios A. Barber, and Stephen Macedo, *American Constitutional Interpretation*, 3rd ed. (New York: Foundation Press, 2003).

Jack Knight) of *The Choices Justices Make* (Washington, DC: Congressional Quarterly Press, 1998), with its roots reaching back to my own *Elements of Judicial Strategy* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1964), indicated we shared similar interests, even if her knowledge was far superior to mine. Much to my joy, and that of Monica Eckman at McGraw-Hill, Prof. Epstein accepted the challenge.

The choice turned out to be wonderfully wise, at least for the book and my peace of mind. She played—brilliantly, patiently, and indefatigably—Herman's role for the third and fourth editions, and I resumed mine: She did the work and I carped. I am sure Herman would have been delighted with the final product and both relieved and amused to see someone else subjected to my compulsions about grammar and syntax. That *Courts, Judges, & Politics'* fifth incarnation was principally due to Prof. Epstein's energy, erudition, and patience in dealing with a nearly dead, though still obsessive, white European male.

When McGraw-Hill began to make noises about a sixth edition, Prof. Epstein decided she needed someone to share the burdens of my nit-picking and to help scour professional journals and official reports for readings that would interest as well as educate students. She invited her long-time coauthor and colleague at Washington University, Jack Knight, the Sidney W. Souers Professor of Government. She chose wisely. Changes in this edition are due to their joint endeavors. Again Herman would have been pleased as well as charmed.

Walter F. Murphy

Albuquerque, NM

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Contents

Preface xvii

Acknowledgments xxi

Part One

THE NATURE OF JUDGING

Chapter 1. Political Jurisprudence	3
CIVIL AND COMMON LAW SYSTEMS	4
<i>The Civil Law</i>	5
<i>The Common Law</i>	6
CONCEPTUALIZATION OF LAW: SCHOOL OF JURISPRUDENCE	7
<i>Natural Law</i>	7
<i>Legal Positivism</i>	8
<i>The Debate</i>	8
THE INSTITUTIONALIZATION OF DECLARATORY THEORY	11
EMERGING CHALLENGES: SOCIOLOGICAL JURISPRUDENCE AND LEGAL REALISM	13
CONTEMPORARY SCHOLARSHIP: THE DEBATE CONTINUES	16
<i>Realism's Progeny and Critics</i>	16
<i>Social Science and the Growth of Political Jurisprudence</i>	18
WHAT IS TO COME	19
<i>Selected References</i>	20
READINGS	
1.1 Sir William Blackstone, <i>COMMENTARIES ON THE LAWS OF ENGLAND</i>	22

1.2 Alexander Hamilton, <i>The Federalist</i> , No.78	23
1.3 Alexis de Tocqueville, <i>JUDICIAL POWER IN THE UNITED STATES</i>	24
1.4 Oliver Wendell Holmes, Jr., <i>THE PATH OF THE LAW</i>	27
1.5 Benjamin N. Cardozo, <i>THE NATURE OF THE JUDICIAL PROCESS</i>	30
1.6 Mary E. Becker, <i>OBSCURING THE STRUGGLE: SEX DISCRIMINATION, SOCIAL SECURITY, AND STONE, SEIDMAN, SUNSTEIN, AND TUSHNET'S CONSTITUTIONAL LAW</i>	34

Chapter 2. Courts in Constitutional Democracies 38

THE ORIGINS OF COURTS	38
<i>Distinctive Characteristics of Judicial Processes</i>	40

THE ROLES OF COURTS	44
<i>Resolving Disputes</i>	44
<i>Making Policy</i>	45
<i>Monitoring Governmental Action</i>	46
<i>Judicial Review in the United States</i>	47
<i>Judicial Review Abroad</i>	48
<i>To What Extent Does Judicial Review Present a Paradox?</i>	51

THE EXPANSION OF JUDICIAL POWER?	53
----------------------------------	----

SELECTED REFERENCES	56
---------------------	----

READINGS

2.1 Lynn Mather, <i>THE FIRED FOOTBALL COACH (OR, HOW TRIAL COURTS MAKE POLICY)</i>	58
2.2 <i>Marbury v. Madison (1803)</i>	61
2.3 <i>Eakin v. Raub (1825)</i>	65
2.4 Robert A. Dahl, <i>DECISION MAKING IN A DEMOCRACY: THE SUPREME COURT AS A NATIONAL POLICY MAKER</i>	67
2.5 D. Casper, <i>THE SUPREME COURT AND NATIONAL POLICY MAKING</i>	70

Part Two

THE AMERICAN LEGAL SYSTEM

Chapter 3. Judicial Organization 77

ESTABLISHING THE U.S. LEGAL SYSTEM	77
<i>Article III</i>	77

<i>The Judiciary Act of 1789</i>	79
<i>Judicial Federalism</i>	81
TODAY'S SYSTEM OF FEDERAL COURTS	82
<i>The U.S. Supreme Court</i>	86
<i>Reforming the Federal Courts: The Caseload "Problem"</i>	88
STATE COURTS	90
A NEW JUDICIAL FEDERALISM	92
<i>Reviewing the Decisions of State Supreme Courts</i>	92
<i>Issuing Injunctions</i>	96
<i>Restricting Habeas Corpus</i>	97
<i>Limiting Exceptions to the Eleventh Amendment</i>	99
SELECTED REFERENCES	100
READINGS	
3.1 Judiciary Act of 1789, section 25	103
3.2 Jonathan Matthew Lohen, <i>INSIDE APPELLATE COURTS</i>	103
3.3 C. K. Rowland and Robert Carp, <i>POLITICS AND JUDGMENT ON THE FEDERAL DISTRICT COURTS</i>	109
3.4 Charles E. Wyzanski, Jr., <i>THE IMPORTANCE OF THE TRIAL JUDGE</i>	113
3.5 J. Woodford Howard, Jr., <i>LITIGATION FLOW IN THREE UNITED STATES COURTS OF APPEALS</i>	115
3.6 Victor Williams, <i>SOLUTIONS TO FEDERAL JUDICIAL GRIDLOCK, versus John O. Newman, 1,000 JUDGES—THE LIMIT FOR AN EFFECTIVE FEDERAL JUDICIARY</i>	117
3.7 Robert A. Kagan, Bliss Cartwright, Lawrence M. Friedman, and Stanton Wheeler, <i>THE EVOLUTION OF STATE SUPREME COURTS</i>	121
3.8 William J. Brennan, <i>GUARDIANS OF OUR LIBERTIES—STATE COURTS NO LESS THAN FEDERAL</i>	129
3.9 <i>Goodrich v. Department of Public Health</i>	132
Chapter 4. Judicial Selection and Retention	141
SELECTION OF FEDERAL JUDGES	142
<i>Presidential Considerations</i>	144
<i>Professional Qualifications</i>	146
<i>Confirmation</i>	147
<i>The Behavior of Judicial Appointees</i>	151
JUDICIAL SELECTION IN THE STATES	152
<i>Debates over States Selection Systems</i>	154

DISCIPLINING JUDGES	155
<i>Federal Judges</i>	156
<i>State Judges</i>	157
SELECTED REFERENCES	159
READINGS	
4.1 Sheldon Goldman, Elliot Slotnick, Gerard Gryski, Gary Zuk, and Sara Schiavoni, <i>THE COMPOSITION OF THE FEDERAL JUDICIARY</i>	162
4.2 Sheldon Goldman, <i>PICKING FEDERAL JUDGES (WITH A POSTSCRIPT ON THE GEORGE W. BUSH ADMINISTRATION)</i>	164
4.3 Neil Lewis, <i>PARTISANSHIP AND THE APPOINTMENT OF FEDERAL JUDGES</i>	172
4.4 Jason M. Roberts, <i>PARTIES, PRESIDENTS, AND PROCEDURES</i>	179
4.5 Gregory A. Caldeira and John R. Wright, <i>LOBBYING FOR JUSTICE</i>	186
4.6 Jeffrey A. Segal, Richard J. Timpone, Robert M. Howard, <i>BUYER BEWARE? PRESIDENTIAL SUCCESS THROUGH SUPREME COURT APPOINTMENTS</i>	193
4.7 Thomas G. Walker and Deborah J. Barrow, <i>THE DIVERSIFICATION OF THE FEDERAL BENCH: POLICY AND PROCESS RAMIFICATIONS</i>	198
4.8 Thurgood Marshall, <i>COMMENTS ON THE MISSOURI PLAN</i>	205
4.9 John T. Wold and John H. Culver, <i>THE DEFEAT OF THE CALIFORNIA JUSTICES</i>	209
Chapter 5. The Bar	212
BECOMING AN ATTORNEY	212
<i>Admission to the Bar</i>	213
THE LAWYER'S WORK	215
<i>Development of the Bar</i>	215
<i>The Contemporary Practice of Law</i>	216
CHALLENGES CONFRONTING THE LEGAL PROFESSION	218
SELECTED REFERENCES	219
READINGS	
5.1 Scott Turow, <i>ONE L: AN INSIDE ACCOUNT OF LIFE IN THE FIRST YEAR AT HARVARD LAW SCHOOL</i>	221
5.2 Austin Sarat and William L. F. Felstiner, <i>LAW AND STRATEGY IN THE DIVORCE LAWYER'S OFFICE</i>	229
5.3 Abraham S. Blumberg, <i>THE PRACTICE OF LAW AS A CONFIDENCE GAME</i>	236

5.4 F. Lee Bailey, <i>THE DEFENSE NEVER RESTS</i>	240
5.5 Sandra Day O'Connor, <i>PROFESSIONALISM</i>	245

Part Three

JUDICIAL POWER

Chapter 6. Access to Judicial Power	253
FORMAL BARRIERS TO ENTRY IN THE AMERICAN LEGAL SYSTEM	253
<i>Jurisdiction</i>	254
<i>Case or Controversy</i>	256
<i>Advisory Opinions</i>	256
<i>Standing</i>	261
<i>Formal Barriers to Access as Gatekeeping Devices</i>	264
INFORMAL BARRIERS TO ENTRY	265
ACCESSING THE LEGAL SYSTEM: WHO USES THE COURTS?	266
<i>The Strategies of Interest Groups</i>	268
<i>The Influence of Interest Groups</i>	272
SELECTED REFERENCES	273
READINGS	
6.1 THE WASHINGTON ADMINISTRATION'S REQUEST FOR AN ADVISORY OPINION AND THE JUSTICES' RESPONSE	276
6.2 <i>Roe v. Wade (1973) versus DeFunis v. Odegaard (1974)</i>	278
6.3 <i>Baker v. Carr (1962)</i>	281
6.4 Marc Galanter, <i>WHY THE "HAVES" COME OUT AHEAD: SPECULATIONS ON THE LIMITS OF SOCIAL CHANGE</i>	285
6.5 Clement E. Vose, <i>LITIGATION AS A FORM OF PRESSURE GROUP ACTIVITY</i>	291
6.6 Gregory A. Caldeira and John R. Wright, <i>ORGANIZED INTERESTS AND AGENDA SETTING IN THE U.S. SUPREME COURT</i>	295
Chapter 7. Instruments of Judicial Power	299
WRITS OF CERTIORARI	300
DECISIONS, OPINIONS, AND ORDERS	301
THE INJUNCTION	302
<i>Injunctions and Positive Action</i>	304
THE CONTEMPT POWER	306

THE WRIT OF HABEAS CORPUS	308
SELECTED REFERENCES	309
READINGS	
7.1 Texas v. Hopwood (1996)	311
7.2 Madsen v. Women's Health Center, Inc. (1994)	312
7.3 Wyatt v. Stickney (1971) AND Wyatt v. Stickney (1972)	317
7.4 Illinois v. Allen (1970)	324
Chapter 8. Limitations on Judicial Power	329
INTERNAL CHECKS	329
INSTITUTIONAL CHECKS	331
CHECKS IMPOSED BY THE AMERICAN SYSTEM OF SEPARATED INSTITUTIONS	334
<i>Political Checks by Executives</i>	335
<i>Legislative Restrictions</i>	337
CHECKS FROM THE STATES	340
CHECKS FROM THE PEOPLE	342
SELECTED REFERENCES	344
READINGS	
8.1 Webster v. Reproductive Health Services (1989)	346
8.2 Lee Epstein and Jack Knight, <i>THE CHOICES JUSTICES MAKE</i>	349
8.3 Jeffrey A. Segal, Donald R. Songer, and Charles M. Cameron, <i>DECISION MAKING ON THE U.S. COURTS OF APPEALS</i>	354
8.4 ANDREW JACKSON'S VETO OF THE BANK BILL	358
8.5 ABRAHAM LINCOLN'S FIRST INAUGURAL ADDRESS, MARCH 4, 1861	359
8.6 Franklin D. Roosevelt, REORGANIZING THE FEDERAL JUDICIARY	360
8.7 GEORGE W. BUSH'S STATEMENT ON SAME-SEX MARRIAGES (2004)	363
8.8 Ex Parte McCardle (1869)	364
8.9 James H. Kuklinski and John E. Stanga, <i>POLITICAL PARTICIPATION AND GOVERNMENT RESPONSIVENESS: THE BEHAVIOR OF CALIFORNIA SUPERIOR COURTS</i>	366
8.10 James L. Gibson, Gregory A. Caldeira, and Vanessa Baird, <i>ON THE LEGITIMACY OF NATIONAL HIGH COURTS</i>	370

Part Four

JUDICIAL DECISION MAKING

Chapter 9. Fact Finding in the Courts	381
THE ADVERSARIAL PROCESS	382
JURIES	383
<i>Jury Trials</i>	384
<i>The Critics and the Defenders of Juries</i>	388
<i>Standards for Fact Finding</i>	389
<i>Adjudicative Facts</i>	390
<i>Legislative Facts and Public Issues</i>	390
<i>Social and Economic Data</i>	391
<i>Contemporary Use of Social Science Evidence: The Death Penalty Cases</i>	394
SELECTED REFERENCES	396
READINGS	
9.1 Marvin E. Frankel, <i>THE ADVERSARY JUDGE: THE EXPERIENCE OF THE TRIAL JUDGE</i>	398
9.2 Hans Zeisel and Harry Kalven, Jr., <i>THE AMERICAN EXPERIMENT</i>	402
9.3 Geoffrey Norman, <i>JUROR FUROR</i>	406
9.4 Clarence Darrow, <i>HOW TO PICK A JURY</i>	410
9.5 Amitai Etzioni, <i>SCIENCE: THREATENING THE JURY TRIAL</i>	412
9.6 Michael Saks, <i>THE LIMITS OF SCIENTIFIC JURY SELECTION</i>	417
9.7 Paul Butler, <i>BLACK JURORS: RIGHT TO ACQUIT?</i>	419
9.8 Tracey Gilstrap Weiss, <i>THE GREAT DEMOCRATIZING PRINCIPLE: THE EFFECT ON SOUTH AFRICA OF PLANNING A DEMOCRACY WITHOUT A JURY SYSTEM</i>	423
9.9 McCLESKEY V. KEMP (1987)	427
9.10 David C. Baldus, <i>THE DEATH PENALTY DIALOGUE BETWEEN LAW AND SOCIAL SCIENCE</i>	433
9.11 John C. Jeffries, Jr., <i>LEWIS F. POWELL, JR.</i>	436
 Chapter 10. Precedents and Legal Reasoning	 438
REASONING BY EXAMPLE	439
RATION DECIDENDI VERSUS DICTA	440
<i>Dicta</i>	441

TREATMENT OF PRECEDENT	443
<i>Distinguishing a Precedent</i>	444
<i>Limiting a Precedent</i>	444
<i>Ignoring a Precedent</i>	445
<i>Overruling a Precedent</i>	446
<i>Extending a Precedent</i>	447
PRECEDENTS AND DECISION MAKING	448
SELECTED REFERENCES	449
READINGS	
10.1 Edward H. Levi, <i>AN INTRODUCTION TO LEGAL REASONING</i>	451
10.2 Lief H. Carter, <i>REASON IN LAW</i>	454
10.3 <i>MACPHERSON V. BUICK MOTOR CO.</i> (1916)	459
10.4 Briefs Filed in <i>U.S. TERM LIMITS V. THORNTON</i> (1995)	462
10.5 <i>PLANNED PARENTHOOD OF SOUTHEASTERN PENNSYLVANIA V. CASEY</i> (1992)	467
10.6 Jeffrey A. Segal and Harold J. Spaeth, <i>THE INFLUENCE OF STARE DECISIS ON THE VOTES OF UNITED STATES SUPREME COURT JUSTICES, VERSUS Jack Knight and Lee Epstein, THE NORM OF STARE DECISIS</i>	476
10.7 Lewis F. Powell, Jr., <i>STARE DECISIS AND JUDICIAL RESTRAINT</i>	484
10.8 Ronald Kahn, <i>INSTITUTIONAL NORMS AND SUPREME COURT DECISION MAKING: THE REHNQUIST COURT ON PRIVACY AND RELIGION</i>	487
Chapter 11. Statutory Interpretation	491
PLAIN MEANING AND THE PROBLEM OF AMBIGUITY	491
DEALING WITH AMBIGUITY: THEORIES OF STATUTORY INTERPRETATION	493
<i>Legislative Intent</i>	494
<i>Legislative Purpose</i>	495
<i>The New Textualism</i>	496
<i>Dynamic Statutory Interpretation</i>	497
PRACTICAL MATTERS IN STATUTORY INTERPRETATION	498
STATUTORY LAW AND JUDICIAL LAW MAKING	500
SELECTED REFERENCES	501
READINGS	
11.1 Felix Frankfurter, <i>SOME REFLECTIONS ON THE READING OF STATUTES</i>	503

11.2 SMITH V. UNITED STATES (1993)	507
11.3 UNITED STEELWORKERS V. WEBER (1979)	510
11.4 Richard A. Posner, <i>THE FEDERAL COURTS</i>	524
11.5 Henry M. Hart, Jr., and Albert M. Sachs, <i>THE LEGAL PROCESS</i>	527
11.6 CONROY V. ANISKOFF (1993)	530
11.7 Frank H. Easterbrook, <i>STATUTES' DOMAINS</i>	531
11.8 William N. Eskridge, Jr., <i>DYNAMIC STATUTORY INTERPRETATION</i>	535
Chapter 12. Constitutional Interpretation	539
CONSTITUTIONAL TEXTS, CONSTITUTIONS, AND CONSTITUTIONALISM	539
WHAT IS TO BE INTERPRETED?	541
WHO SHALL INTERPRET?	542
HOW SHOULD JUDGES INTERPRET THE CONSTITUTION? INTERPRETIVE STYLE IN THE UNITED STATES	544
MODES OF INTERPRETATION	545
<i>The Text</i>	545
<i>Stare Decisis and Doctrinal Analysis</i>	545
<i>Original Intent or Understanding</i>	547
<i>Structural Analysis</i>	550
<i>Purposive Analysis</i>	551
<i>Polls of Other Jurisdictions</i>	554
<i>Polls of Courts Abroad</i>	555
<i>Balancing of Interests</i>	556
<i>Cost-Benefit Analysis</i>	556
CONSTITUTIONAL INTERPRETATION AS A FORM OF STATECRAFT	557
SELECTED REFERENCES	558
READINGS	
12.1 UNITED STATES V. NIXON (1974)	561
12.2 Antonin Scalia, <i>ORIGINALISM: THE LESSER EVIL</i>	566
12.3 Robert H. Bork, <i>THE TEMPTING OF AMERICA</i>	571
12.4 Thurgood Marshall, <i>REFLECTIONS ON THE BICENTENNIAL OF THE UNITED STATES CONSTITUTION</i>	579
12.5 THE STATE V. MAKWANYANE (1995)	582
12.6 UNITED STATES V. LEON (1984)	585