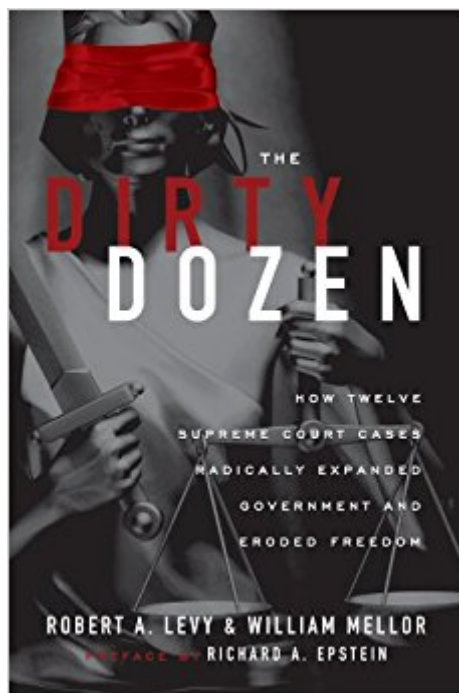




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The Dirty Dozen: How Twelve Supreme Court Cases Radically Expanded Government And Eroded Freedom



Synopsis

The Founding Fathers wanted the judicial branch to serve as a check on the power of the legislative and executive, and gave the Supreme Court the responsibility of interpreting the Constitution in a way that would safeguard individual freedoms. Sadly, the Supreme Court has handed down many destructive decisions on cases you probably never learned about in school. In *The Dirty Dozen*, two distinguished legal scholars shed light on the twelve worst cases, which allowed government to interfere in your private contractual agreements; curtail your rights to criticize or support political candidates; arrest and imprison you indefinitely, without filing charges; seize your private property, without compensation, when someone uses the property for criminal activity—•even if you don't know about it!

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Customer Reviews

Sad but indispensable book, for those who want to understand the myriad of crossroads where SCOTUS blew-it and took us down the wrong path (translation: undermined either individual liberty,

or Federalism, or states' rights (which was itself an integral aspect of the original system of Federalism). Most of the reasons for the sell-out are political, in my opinion. And the mistakes usually flow from the 3 biggest loopholes in the Constitution: The Necessary & Proper Clause; The Commerce Clause; and The General Welfare Clause.

This book does a great job of explaining how politicians (from both the left and right) and public appeal have persuaded the supreme court to arrive at unconstitutional rulings, primarily over the last century. The result has been a progressive and scary move towards bigger government at the expense of the personal freedoms and liberties that are the cornerstone of our constitution. The book does much more than complain; it recounts in unbiased details, it offers explanations of the rationale for the decisions, it illustrates the widespread implications of each ruling, and it offers hope with a described path back to the days of achieving and retaining one's own self worth.

Americans have long looked to the Supreme Court as the last bastion of their liberties and as the one institution that stands as a check against the encroachments of an Executive Branch eager to expand its power and and a Legislative Branch intent on satisfying the whims of a grasping majority. As Robert Levy and William Mellor demonstrate in their must-read book *The Dirty Dozen: How Twelve Supreme Court Cases Radically Expanded Government and Eroded Freedom*, that is far from the truth. In reality, and especially in the 3/4 of a century since the New Deal, the Supreme Court has essentially stood by while the Federal Government, and the states, whittle away at long cherished American liberties. Though they deals with at-times complex legal issues, Levy and Mellor have done a great job in this book of making those issues understandable even to someone without legal training. For each case selected, they set forth the facts of the case, their position on where the Court got it wrong, and the consequences that have developed from that decision. They also deal separately with two of the most controversial Supreme Court cases of the past 30-odd years; *Roe v. Wade* and *Bush v. Gore*. For different reasons, they fail to include either case in their "Dirty Dozen" list largely because they believe that the Court at least got the result right even if one could find problems with the way they got there. In each case, Levy and Mellor clearly explain how the Court ignored the plain text of the Constitution, precedent, and quite often common sense, to reach it's decision and how those decisions have increased the power of the state at the expense of individual liberty. One may disagree with the author's choice of cases; it would have been interesting, for example, for them to discuss "Dirty Dozen" cases from the era prior to 1937 (and there are certainly enough of them) and how those decisions lead to the judicial ideology that created the

case law they rightly decry. However, it's fairly clear that they've selected a dozen pretty bad cases, and the book provides an object lesson of what happens when one of the branches of government ignores its Constitutional responsibilities.

Answers lots of questions about how America got to where it is today.

If you think that the Constitution will always be there to protect you, think again. This book illustrates what can happen when supreme court justices get it wrong: the laws that protect the people from their government lose their meaning and we're left that much more defenseless. The Dirty Dozen is one of those books that should be on everyone's summer reading list. But the truly magnificent part about this particular work is that its veracity is NOT up for grabs- whereas many books offering one or another particular version of history will be touted as both fact and farce (depending on who you talk to), this one's got all the bases covered. Even the most hardened liberals will concede that the outcomes of the dirty dozen cases are alarming signs that the power of government, when left unchecked, threatens us all.

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