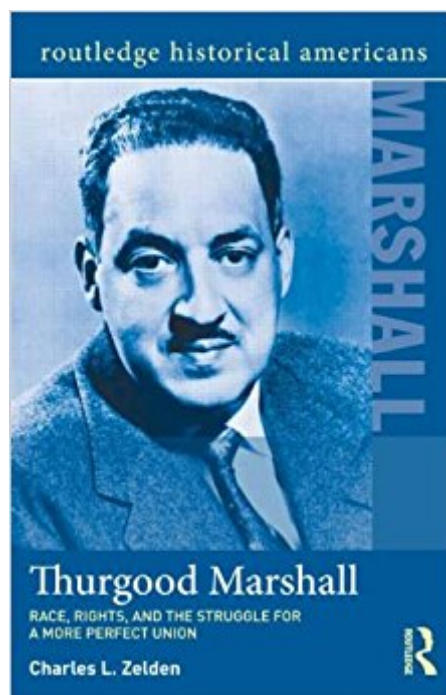




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Thurgood Marshall: Race, Rights, And The Struggle For A More Perfect Union (Routledge Historical Americans)



Synopsis

Thurgood Marshall was an Associate Justice of the US Supreme Court from 1967 to 1991. He was the first African American to hold that position, and was one of the most influential legal actors of his time. Before being appointed to the Supreme Court by President Lyndon Johnson, Marshall was a lawyer for the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), Federal Judge (1961-1965), and Solicitor General of the United States (1965-1966). Marshall won twenty-nine of thirty-two cases before the Supreme Court – most notably the landmark case of *Brown v. Board of Education*, which held segregated public schools unconstitutional. Marshall spent his career fighting racial segregation and legal inequality, and his time on the court establishing a record for supporting the "voiceless American." He left a legacy of change that still affects American society today. Through this concise biography, accompanied by primary sources that present Marshall in his own words, students will learn what Marshall did (and did not do) during his life, why those actions were important, and what effects his efforts had on the larger course of American history.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

"A lively and accessible account of one of the most important figures in American legal history. Zelden shows Thurgood Marshall's passion for equality under the law as he faced danger representing African Americans in segregated towns, successfully challenged segregation in

Brown, and sought to defend equality as a Supreme Court Justice." — Mary L. Dudziak, author of *Exporting American Dreams: Thurgood Marshall's African Journey* "Providing a valuable overview of Thurgood Marshall's importance in twentieth-century American history, Charles Zelden tells the story of Marshall's life and career with clear presentations of the legal and technical materials from which Marshall forged modern civil rights law." — Mark Tushnet, co-editor of *The Routledge Handbook of Constitutional Law* "What this book does, and does remarkably well, is synthesize a great deal of information into a book that covers both the man and the many legal battles with which he was involved into a portrait that is sharply written, effectively organized, and impressively concise. This is no small feat. Zelden has given us an accessible and engaging introduction to Marshall and the central role he played in the legal history of the twentieth century." — Christopher W. Schmidt, Chicago-Kent College of Law

Charles L. Zelden is Professor of History at Nova Southeastern University. He is the author of many books, including *Bush v. Gore: Exposing the Hidden Crisis in American Democracy* and *The Supreme Court and Elections Into the Political Thicket*.

Another scholarly work from a talented writer, Dr. Zelden masterfully combines erudition with readability. Covering the challenges of being on each side of the bench through the height of a racially-charged America in the twentieth century, Zelden's book on Thurgood Marshall paints a compelling portrait of a true pioneer in American jurisprudence. An important book of American legal history, I highly recommend it.

Thurgood Marshall (1908-1993) was a giant of American history, in great measure because he was devoted to the rule of law. This concise, skillfully-written biography captures the full measure of Marshall's life and his significance for the American constitutional experiment. The author of excellent, accessible studies of the history of voting rights and American law in the South, Charles Zelden has done an exemplary job of recounting and explaining Marshall's life, his development as a lawyer, his activism in the cause of civil rights through creative uses of law, and his service as a federal appellate judge, U.S. Solicitor General, and the first African-American Associate Justice of the U.S. Supreme Court. The core of this fine book examines Marshall's career as apprentice to, protege of, and successor to Charles Hamilton Houston, whose skilled leadership of the NAACP Legal Defense Fund laid the groundwork for the modern civil rights movement's victories in the

courts. It demonstrates that, even had Marshall not ascended to the federal bench, he would be remembered as a great lawyer and legal strategist, and the victor in *BROWN v. BOARD OF EDUCATION*, *SMITH v. ALLWRIGHT*, and other landmark cases on civil rights. The last chapter, examining Marshall's increasing frustration as an Associate Justice confronting an increasingly conservative Court, is poignant and moving. All told, Zelden's book is essential reading -- not just for anyone interested in Thurgood Marshall, but for anyone interested in the law, in civil rights, in African-American history, in American history, and in social justice.

I can't add much to Mr. Bernstein's extremely intelligent review. This 201 page book does a great job of presenting Thurgood Marshall's life and work. The writing is excellent, not too academic and not dumbed down. Comparing this book to others about Marshall, Zelden seems to have done very good research and had very good judgment about what was important. Highly recommended. Other books worth reading on Marshall or related subjects: Greenberg, Jack, *Brown v. Board of Education: Witness to a Landmark Decision*, Twelve Tables Press, 2004 Greenberg, Jack, *Crusaders in the Courts: How a Dedicated Band of Lawyers Fought for the Civil Rights Revolution*, Basic Books, 1994 King, Gilbert, *Devil in the Grove: Thurgood Marshall, the Groveland Boys, and the Dawn of a New America*, Harper Perennial; Reprint edition, 2013 Kluger, Richard, *Simple Justice: The History of Brown v. Board of Education and Black America's Struggle for Equality*, Vintage, 2004 Mack, Kenneth W., *Representing the Race: The Creation of the Civil Rights Lawyer*, Harvard University Press; Reprint edition, 2014 McNeil, Genna Rae A. Leon Higginbotham Jr., *Groundwork: Charles Hamilton Houston and the Struggle for Civil Rights*, University of Pennsylvania Press, 1984 Smith, J. Clay Jr., *Thurgood Marshall (Foreword), Emancipation: The Making of the Black Lawyer, 1844-1944*, University of Pennsylvania Press, 1999 Williams, Juan, *Thurgood Marshall: American Revolutionary*, Broadway Books; Reprint edition, 2000 Midwest Independent Research <http://mwir-improvements.blogspot.com/>

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