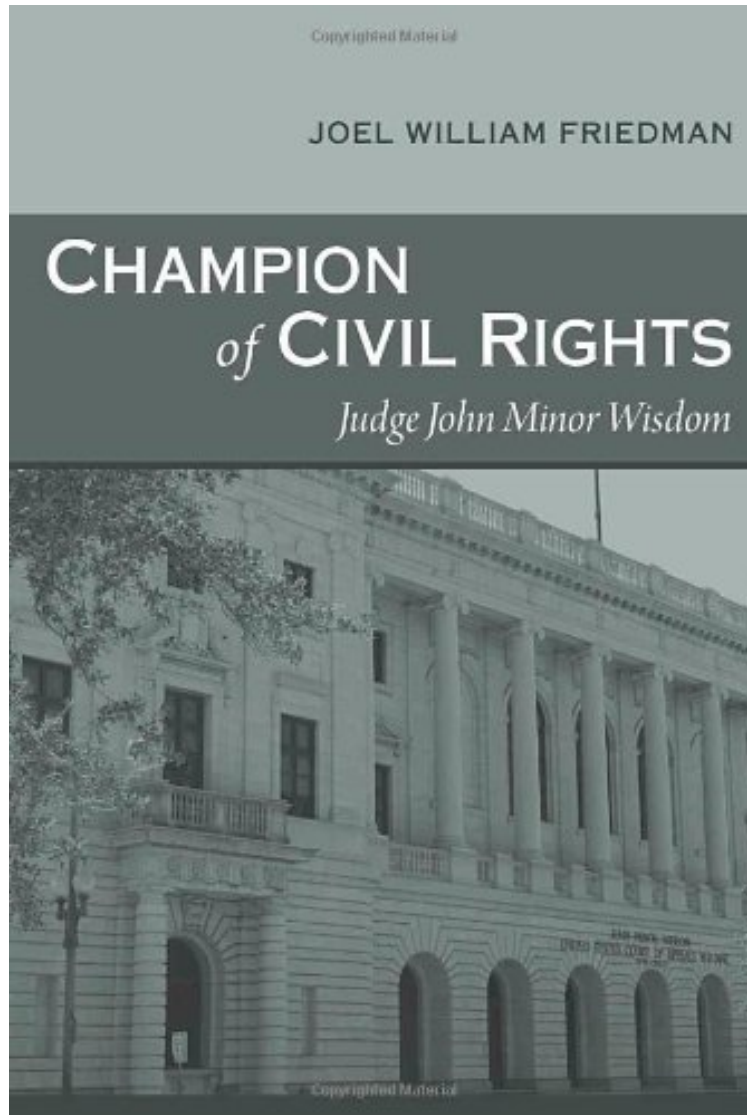


[Free pdf] Champion of Civil Rights: Judge John Minor Wisdom (Southern Biography Series)

Champion of Civil Rights: Judge John Minor Wisdom (Southern Biography Series)

Joel William Friedman

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Joel William Friedman : Champion of Civil Rights: Judge John Minor Wisdom (Southern Biography Series) before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Champion of Civil Rights: Judge John Minor Wisdom (Southern Biography Series):

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Superb book on a legal giant: John Minor Wisdom By William D. Elliott Anyone interested in either a social history of the racial integration of the south from Brown v. Board of

Education, the U.S. Fifth Circuit or even modern legal history should consider Professor's Friedman excellent biography of Judge John Minor Wisdom of the Fifth Circuit. Judge Wisdom was one of the four Fifth Circuit judges who led the way for desegregation the south through judicial decisions. Arguably, Judge Wisdom was singularly the most important of the Federal judges on this issue. As befitting a book by a first-class legal scholar, Friedman's biography is well-written, detailed, amply footnoted and informative. This book ranks deserves a place on any bookshelf of the history of the Fifth Circuit, along with those major Fifth Circuit histories, such as (1) Jack Bass, *Unlikely Heroes*, (2) Harvey Couch, *A History of the Fifth Circuit 1891-1981*, (3) Thomas G. Walker Deborah Barrow, *A Court Divided: The Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals and the Politics of Judicial Reform*, (4) J.W. Peltason, *Fifty-Eight Lonely Men: Southern Federal Judges and School Desegregation* and others. In addition to a review of the major judicial decisions by Judge Wisdom, Friedman parses the correspondence among the judges on the Fifth Circuit to provide interesting background to the major judicial decisions by Judge Wisdom. Many book reviews find a point or two to criticize, but I do not have any criticisms of this book. Well done.

One of the least publicly recognized heroes of the civil rights movement in the United States, John Minor Wisdom served as a member of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit from 1957 until his death in 1999 and wrote many of the landmark decisions instrumental in desegregating the American South. In this revealing biography, law professor Joel William Friedman explores Judge Wisdom's substantial legal contributions and political work at a critical time in the history of the South. In 1957, President Eisenhower appointed Wisdom to the Fifth Circuit, which included some of the most deeply segregated southern states: Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, and Texas. In the tumultuous two decades following its decision in *Brown v. Board of Education*, the Supreme Court issued only a few civil rights decisions, preferring instead to affirm Fifth Circuit Court opinions or let them stand without hearing an appeal. Judge Wisdom, therefore, authored many of the decisions that transformed the South and broke down barriers of all kinds for African Americans, including the desegregation of public schools. In preparing this first full-length biography of Judge Wisdom, Friedman had unrestricted access to Wisdom's voluminous repository of personal and professional papers. In addition, he draws on personal interviews with law clerks who served under Judge Wisdom, resulting in a unique, behind-the-scenes account of some of the nation's most important legal decisions: the admission of the first black student to the University of Mississippi, the initiation of contempt proceedings against Mississippi Governor Ross Barnett, and the destruction of obstacles that had previously kept black Americans from voting. Friedman also explores Wisdom's political life prior to joining the federal bench, including his pivotal role in resurrecting the Louisiana Republican Party and in securing the Republican presidential nomination for Eisenhower. A compelling account of how a child of privilege from one of America's most socially and racially stratified cities came to serve as the driving force behind the legal effort to end segregation, *Champion of Civil Rights* offers judicial biography at its best.

From the Back Cover "Joel William Friedman's biography of federal judge John Minor Wisdom (1905--1999) fills an important gap in civil rights historiography." -- *Journal of Southern History* "Champion of Civil Rights... is required reading for anyone interested in the legal and cultural history of the South during the last fifty years of the twentieth century." -- *Georgia Historical Quarterly* One of the least publicly recognized heroes of the civil rights movement in the United States, John Minor Wisdom served as a member of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit from 1957 until his death in 1999. During his time on the bench, he wrote many of the landmark decisions instrumental in desegregating the American South. In this revealing biography, law professor Joel William Friedman explores the substantial legal and political contributions Judge Wisdom made during a critical period in the history of the South. The Fifth Circuit, which included some of the most deeply segregated southern states, was transformed by many of the decisions authored by Judge Wisdom. In preparing this first full-length biography, Friedman had unrestricted access to Wisdom's voluminous repository of personal and professional papers. Friedman's use of firsthand interviews with law clerks who served under Judge Wisdom also provides a unique, behind-the-scenes account of some of the nation's most important legal decisions. *Champion of Civil Rights* serves as a compelling account of how a child of privilege from New Orleans -- one of America's most socially and racially stratified cities -- came to act as the driving force behind the legal effort to end segregation. Joel William Friedman is the Jack M. Gordon Professor of Procedural Law and Jurisdiction at Tulane University Law School in New Orleans. About the Author Joel William Friedman is the Jack M. Gordon Professor of Procedural Law and Jurisdiction at Tulane University Law School in New Orleans.