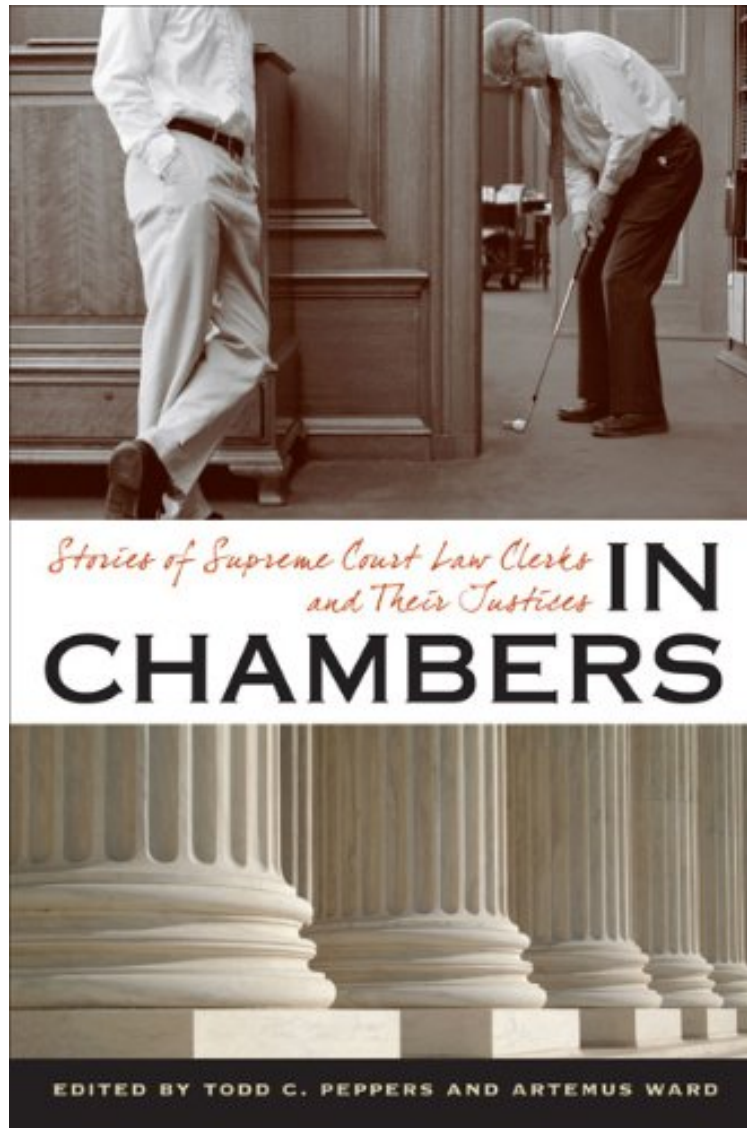


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In Chambers: Stories of Supreme Court Law Clerks and Their Justices (Constitutionalism and Democracy)

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File size: 44.Mb

From Todd C Peppers : In Chambers: Stories of Supreme Court Law Clerks and Their Justices (Constitutionalism and Democracy) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised In Chambers: Stories of Supreme Court Law Clerks and Their Justices (Constitutionalism and Democracy):

16 of 16 people found the following review helpful. The Clerks' Eyewitness Views of their Justices By Ronald H. Clark This is one of the most interesting books on the Supreme Court I have ever read, and I have been reading them for the past 45 years or so. Within the last ten years or so, increasing attention has come to be paid to the Court's law clerks and their important role in the functioning of the institution. Originally, the focus of interest was whether the clerks exercised too much influence on the decision-making processes of their Justices. A much richer perspective was developed individually by the two editors of this volume, in separate books I reviewed on . That perspective entails examining such issues as how are the clerks selected, what responsibilities do they assume, and how they interact with their respective Justice and the other Justices as well. The many authors of these essays lay it all out in fascinating detail. The authors are either former clerks writing about their own Justice, or students of the Court who are conversant with the growing literature on the clerks First up is a discussion of the creation of the clerk position by Justice Horace Gray between 1882 and 1902, continuing his practice from his service on the Supreme Judicial Court of Massachusetts. Gray had to pay his clerks out of his own pocket; eventually, Congress funded a position for each Justice. The clerk's role underwent serious development beginning in the 1920's, and that is where the essays begin with Holmes, Brandeis, Cardozo (by his biographer, Andrew Kaufman), and Stone (written by the amazing Bennett Boskey, still practicing here in Washington in his mid-90's). These all are great essays; what a way to kick off the volume! Next, the editors take us into what they term the "Premodern Clerkship Institution," with two essays on Black, and individual essays on Frankfurter, Douglas, Rutledge and Whittaker. Also included are essays on the first female clerk, Lucile Lomen, and African-American clerk, William Coleman--somewhat of an institution here in Washington. Some surprising judicial pictures emerge, with Frankfurter turning out to be a warm mentor to his clerks while Douglas treats them somewhat like serfs. Once again, the essays in this section are all top-notch. The "Modern Clerkship Institution" collects the final group of essays. The subjects are Warren, Brennan, Goldberg, White, Thurgood Marshall, Blackmun, Powell, Rehnquist and Ginsburg. These essays are particularly interesting since they are drawn from the modern court period of 1953 to the present. Of these, I found editor Artemus Ward's essay on Rehnquist particularly insightful and valuable. Not only do we learn something of Rehnquist the man, but also how the Chief Justice's law clerks (including the present CJ, John Roberts) functioned in an somewhat more expansive role than the Associate Justices' clerks. An afterword by reporter Tony Mauro and an appendix of two documents (including a key letter from Rehnquist's co-clerk under Robert Jackson in reference to who wrote the famous memo "A Random Thought on the Segregation Cases" that caused Rehnquist much trouble during his confirmation hearings to become CJ) conclude the 410-page volume. The two primary benefits of this collection are: (a) we learn about the informal personalities of some major Justices; and (b) we see how absolutely essential the clerks are to the effective functioning of the Court. In fact, I would suggest that one really can't understand how the current Court works without consuming this volume--it is that good. 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. In Chambers By ajf An apt title, as this collection of mini-memoirs puts you right in the Supreme Court chambers (and sometimes at home) with the Justices and their clerks. The book is an insightful look into the inner workings of the Court...worth the time for anyone interested in the legal process at the top of the pyramid. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. SCOTUS By sparks If you like to read about the back court doings of the Supremes you will find this book interesting and certainly not as expensive as the ridiculously priced "Courtwatchers" published recently by Rowman and Littlefield which I would also like to peruse but not at the asking price.

Written by former law clerks, legal scholars, biographers, historians, and political scientists, the essays in *In Chambers* tell the fascinating story of clerking at the Supreme Court. In addition to reflecting the personal experiences of the law clerks with their justices, the essays reveal how clerks are chosen, what tasks are assigned to them, and how the institution of clerking has evolved over time, from the first clerks in the late 1800s to the clerks of Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg and Chief Justice William Rehnquist. *In Chambers* offers a variety of perspectives on the unique experience of Supreme Court clerks. Former law clerks including Alan M. Dershowitz, Charles A. Reich, and J. Harvie Wilkinson III write about their own clerkships, painting vivid and detailed pictures of their relationships with the justices, while other authors write about the various clerkships for a single justice, putting a justice's practice into a broader context. The book also includes essays about the first African American and first woman to hold clerkships. Sharing their insights, anecdotes, and experiences in a clear, accessible style, the contributors provide readers with a rare glimpse into the inner workings of the Supreme Court.

Filled with telling anecdotes illuminating the personalities of Supreme Court justices, these essays also show how the institution of the Supreme Court law clerk has developed. Law clerks and their employers come through in these essays as human beings working in an extraordinary environment. (Mark Tushnet, Harvard Law School author of *A Court Divided: The Rehnquist Court and the Future of Constitutional Law*) *In Chambers* is a worthy successor to the editors' landmark books on law clerks in the Supreme Court. The contributors' essays present vivid and informative depictions of the interactions between justices and clerks, and in the process they tell us a good deal that is new about the Court and its personnel. People with an interest in the Supreme Court will enjoy and learn from this valuable book. (Larry

Baum, The Ohio State University author of *The Supreme Court*)As we learn more about how the once and still secretive Supreme Court functions, the role of law clerks becomes increasingly important in understanding the inner dynamic as well as the nuts and bolts of the judicial process on high. Todd Peppers and Artemus Ward have given us not only a fascinating view of the world of the clerks and their justices but one that will be essential to future historians working to explicate the nation's most important tribunal. (Melvin I. Urofsky, Virginia Commonwealth University author of *Division and Discord: The Supreme Court under Stone and Vinson, 1941-1953*) "This new collection of essays, including some by former clerks, takes readers inside justices' chambers for a look at clerkship life.... [T]he best parts of the book are the behind-the-scenes descriptions of life at the court: Justice Hugo Black cooking breakfast for the two clerks that lived with him during the 1953 term, Justice Byron White engaging in in-office golf putting competitions with his clerks, and Chief Justice William Rehnquist putting together NCAA betting pools and taking walks outside the court with his clerks.... [A]n impressive and comprehensive book." (Associated Press) Peppers and Ward have edited a wonderful collection of essays.... The essays in this volume, most of which have not been published before, highlight the important role that clerks play on the Court. They also do an extraordinary job of revealing the human face of the Court.... Highly recommended. (CHOICE) [A]n excellent book... It's interesting for many different reasons, not the least of which as a reminder of how much of a bastion of elitism the Court has always been. You should read it if you are interested in legal history, or in learning more about the way the justices lived and worked, or even if you want to know why the Court still sometimes acts as though it were the 19th Century. (The Atlantic Monthly) About the Author Todd C. Peppers, Henry H. and Trudye H. Fowler Associate Professor of Public Affairs at Roanoke College and a Visiting Professor of Law at Washington and Lee University School of Law, is the author of *Courtiers of the Marble Palace: The Rise and Influence of the Supreme Court Law Clerk*. Artemus Ward, Associate Professor of Political Science at Northern Illinois University, is the coauthor, with David Weiden, of *Sorcerers' Apprentices: 100 Years of Law Clerks at the United States Supreme Court*.