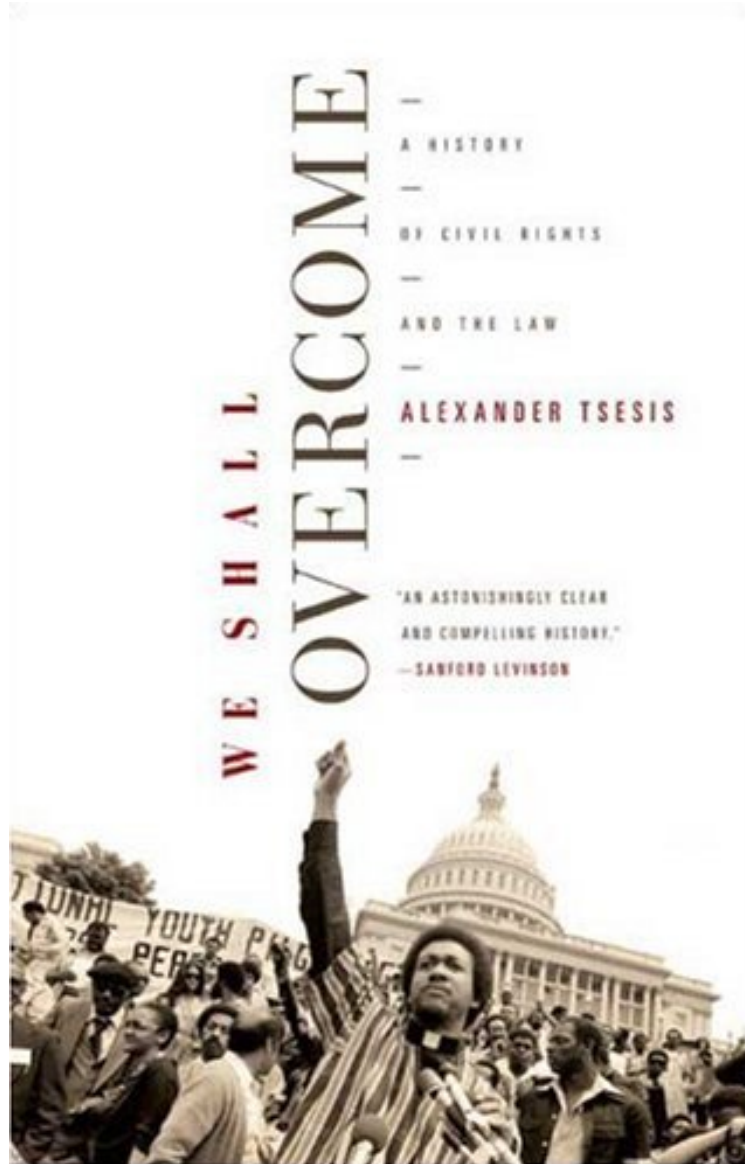


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# We Shall Overcome: A History of Civil Rights and the Law

*Alexander Tsesis*

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**Alexander Tsesis : We Shall Overcome: A History of Civil Rights and the Law** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised We Shall Overcome: A History of Civil Rights and the Law:

Despite America's commitment to civil rights from the earliest days of nationhood, examples of injustices against minorities stain many pages of U.S. history. The battle for racial, ethnic, and gender fairness remains unfinished. This comprehensive book traces the history of legal efforts to achieve civil rights for all Americans, beginning with the years leading up to the Revolution and continuing to our own times. The historical adventure Alexander Tsesis recounts is filled with fascinating events, with real change and disappointing compromise, and with courageous individuals and organizations committed to ending injustice. Viewing the evolution of civil rights through the lens of legal history, Tsesis considers laws that have restricted civil rights (such as Jim Crow regulations and prohibitions against intermarriage) and laws that have expanded rights (including antisegregation legislation and other legal advances of the civil rights era). He focuses particular attention on the African American fight for civil rights but also discusses the struggles of women, gays and lesbians, Japanese Americans, Latinos, Native Americans, and Jews. He concludes by assessing the current state of civil rights in the United States and exploring likely future expansions of civil rights.

From Publishers Weekly Tsesis, a professor of law and author of *The Thirteenth Amendment and American Freedom*, offers an ambitious history of how the Supreme Court, presidential orders, and state and federal legislative bodies have affected the ability of minorities to secure their civil rights. As the history unfolds readers will find it hard not to feel outrage at the shameful complicity of the Supreme Court, who, following the Civil War, chose to interpret the Constitution and Civil Rights Amendments in a literalist way, allowing the southern states to continue to disenfranchise African-Americans. But this history also includes the progress, however imperfect, made in securing civil rights since WWII, when African-Americans returning from the war and women on the home front would no longer tolerate the endemic pre-war racism and sexism. Tsesis is effective at describing the infrastructure of that progress, foremost the passage of 1960s Civil Rights legislation that ensured voting rights and prohibited discrimination in housing and employment. The author also covers the women's suffrage movement, examines the internment of Japanese Americans during WWII, and considers the growth of legal protections of private consensual sexual conduct. As Tsesis shows, the battle for civil rights in America is one whose history is filled with abuses as well as, in the last fifty years, genuine progress. Copyright Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. *We Shall Overcome* is a comprehensive history of Civil Rights and the Law in the United States from the revolutionary era to the present. . . . a fine syntheses of the evolution of legal developments concerning Native Americans, sex equity, including discrimination based on sexual orientation, and discrimination based on national origin and language. Mary Frances Berry, *American Studies* (Mary Frances Berry *American Studies*) About the Author Alexander Tsesis is assistant professor of law at Loyola University of Chicago, School of Law. His previous books include *The Thirteenth Amendment and American Freedom: A Legal History and Destructive Messages: How Hate Speech Paves the Way for Harmful Social Movements*. He lives in Chicago and Milwaukee.