



Courtwatchers: Eyewitness Accounts in Supreme Court History

Clare Cushman

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In the first Supreme Court history told primarily through eyewitness accounts from Court insiders, Clare Cushman provides readers with a behind-the-scenes look at the people, practices, and traditions that have shaped an American institution for more than 200 years. Each chapter covers one general thematic topic and weaves a narrative from memoirs, letters, diaries, and newspaper accounts by the Justices, their spouses and children, court reporters, clerks, oral advocates, court staff, journalists, and other eyewitnesses. These accounts allow readers to feel as if they are squeezed into the packed courtroom in 1844 as silver-tongued orator Daniel Webster addresses the court; eavesdropping on an exasperated Oliver Wendell Holmes, Jr., in 1930 as he snaps at a clerk's critique of his draft opinion; or sharing a taxi with future Chief Justice John G. Roberts, Jr., in 2005 as he rushes home from the airport in anticipation of a phone call from President Bush offering him the nomination to the Supreme Court. This entertaining and enlightening tour of the Supreme Court's colorful personalities and inner workings will be of interest to all readers of American political and legal history.



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