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**A Review of *Landmark Supreme Court Cases: A Reference Guide*, by Donald E. Lively.**

**Westport, Conn: Greenwood Press: 1999. 384 pages. Hardcover: \$59.95.**

Reviewed by Bernie D. Jones

Donald E. Lively has written a reference guide to landmark Supreme Court cases. In the preface it states: the purpose of this work is to provide readable discussions of important Supreme Court cases so that they can be easily understood by students and lay readers. (vii). This work is divided up into four parts, in which the first section focuses upon those decisions dealing with determining national government power and "the distribution of power among its various branches." (viii). The second discusses the cases that determined the relationship between the national and state government within federalism and regulation of the nation's economy. The third part relates to race and equality following Reconstruction, and "the final and most expansive part of the book identifies landmark cases on personal rights and liberties." He discusses the constitutional amendments at issue in the various cases, whether it is the first amendment freedom of speech or the freedom of the press, as an example.

The cases follow topically and in chronological order. He is interested in demonstrating to the reader how the Court developed over time with respect to the specific issue in question. He also provides fact boxes to provide the reader quick information, a summary of the facts of the case and its impact, and a bibliography for further reading. He includes a glossary of legal terms, an appendix listing the holdings of cases in the volume, and provides a copy of the United State Constitution.

The cases are edited, insofar as Lively provides the historical significance of the cases and explains why the specific case is significant. His study is more than a recitation of the opinion. Thus, in part one of chapter one, Lively presents judicial review under the theme of separation of powers. He begins with *Marbury v. Madison* and tells why the opinion mattered at the time, and what the lasting significance of the case was. The fact box provides the citation, states what the issue was, the year of the decision, and what the Court said. He also tells who the author of the opinion was, and the vote of the

justices. His annotated bibliography is particularly helpful: he tells what each source has to offer the reader who is interested in learning more about the specific issues raised by each case.

*Landmark Supreme Court Cases: A Reference Guide* is a very good resource for those interested in a user-friendly constitutional history text. It permits the reader to identify key Supreme Court cases at a glance, establish relationships between cases and the development of American constitutional doctrine, within the various historical factors, political or otherwise, which impacted the decisions.

by BERNIE D. JONES

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