



## The Nine: Inside the Secret World of the Supreme Court

By Jeffrey Toobin



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Acclaimed journalist Jeffrey Toobin takes us into the chambers of the most important—and secret—legal body in our country, the Supreme Court, revealing the complex dynamic among the nine people who decide the law of the land. An institution at a moment of transition, the Court now stands at a crucial point, with major changes in store on such issues as abortion, civil rights, and church-state relations. Based on exclusive interviews with the justices and with a keen sense of the Court's history and the trajectory of its future, Jeffrey Toobin creates in *The Nine* a riveting story of one of the most important forces in American life today.

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### Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

It's not laws or constitutional theory that rule the High Court, argues this absorbing group profile, but quirky men and women guided by political intuition. *New Yorker* legal writer Toobin (*The Run of His Life: The People v. O.J. Simpson*) surveys the Court from the Reagan administration onward, as the justices wrestled with abortion, affirmative action, the death penalty, gay rights and church-state separation. Despite a Court dominated by Republican appointees, Toobin paints not a conservative revolution but a period of intractable moderation. The real power, he argues, belonged to supreme swing-voter Sandra Day O'Connor, who decided important cases with what Toobin sees as an almost primal attunement to a middle-of-the-road public consensus. By contrast, he contends, conservative justices Rehnquist and Scalia ended up bitter old men, their rigorous constitutional doctrines made irrelevant by the moderates' compromises. The author deftly distills the issues and enlivens his narrative of the Court's internal wranglings with sharp thumbnail sketches (Anthony Kennedy the vain bloviator, David Souter the Thoreauvian ascetic) and editorials (inept and unsavory is his verdict on the Court's intervention in the 2000 election). His savvy account puts the supposedly cloistered Court right in the thick of American life. (A final chapter and epilogue on the 2006–2007 term, with new justices Roberts and Alito, was unavailable to *PW*.) (Sept. 18)

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From [Bookmarks Magazine](#)

*The Nine* is a welcome addition to the spate of recent Supreme Court histories (see Jan Crawford Greenburg's *Supreme Conflict*, \*\*\*1/2 May/June 2007). Informative and authoritative, Jeffrey Toobin's account draws on exclusive interviews with the principals (one critic cited a possible breach of secrecy) and offers colorful anecdotes about the members of the Court. The most important parts of the book explore Sandra Day O'Connor's critical swing votes, Clinton's impeachment hearings, and the Court's role in *Bush v. Gore*. "The tragedy," Toobin concludes, "was not that it led to Bush's victory, but the inept and unsavory manner that the justices exercised their power." Only David J. Garrow, a Supreme Court historian, faulted Toobin's "debatable opinions" and disdain for various justices. Well written, though chronologically disjointed, *The Nine* is, overall, a timely and important examination of the Court's past-and its future.

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From [Booklist](#)

With every nomination to the U.S. Supreme Court and every decision on the hot-button issues of abortion, gay rights, and affirmative action, it is apparent that the nation's highest court has not escaped the turmoil of deep and growing political divisions. Drawing on interviews with the justices and other insiders, best-selling author Toobin weighs in with an absorbing look at the politics and personalities behind the men and women who adjudicate our most compelling issues. Conservative power brokers have moved to exert more influence on the Supreme Court and its ability to have more lasting impact than the Congress and the presidency. Toobin looks back over the tenure of Chief Justice William Rehnquist, the most stable in recent years, the considerable influence of moderate Sandra Day O'Connor, and the growing clout of the more conservative members. Toobin details the behind-the-scenes machinations to determine what cases are heard and under what circumstances, as well as who writes the majority opinion and the dissent, all factors that affect the framing of debate on issues. He also relays the politics and personalities of the justices: Rehnquist, who for 30 years was a regular at a poker game among the Washington power elite; Clarence Thomas, traveling with his wife and grandnephew across country in an RV; David Souter, never accepting gifts;

Antonin Scalia, bombastic and opinionated but disappointed at his inability to have a greater impact; and O'Connor's eventual disillusionment with the Bush administration and the Republican Party. A compelling look at the power and the politics behind the Supreme Court. Bush, Vanessa

## **Users Review**

### **From reader reviews:**

#### **Charles Tebo:**

The book The Nine: Inside the Secret World of the Supreme Court make you feel enjoy for your spare time. You need to use to make your capable much more increase. Book can for being your best friend when you getting strain or having big problem using your subject. If you can make looking at a book The Nine: Inside the Secret World of the Supreme Court to become your habit, you can get considerably more advantages, like add your own personal capable, increase your knowledge about a number of or all subjects. You could know everything if you like open and read a publication The Nine: Inside the Secret World of the Supreme Court. Kinds of book are several. It means that, science publication or encyclopedia or other folks. So , how do you think about this reserve?

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