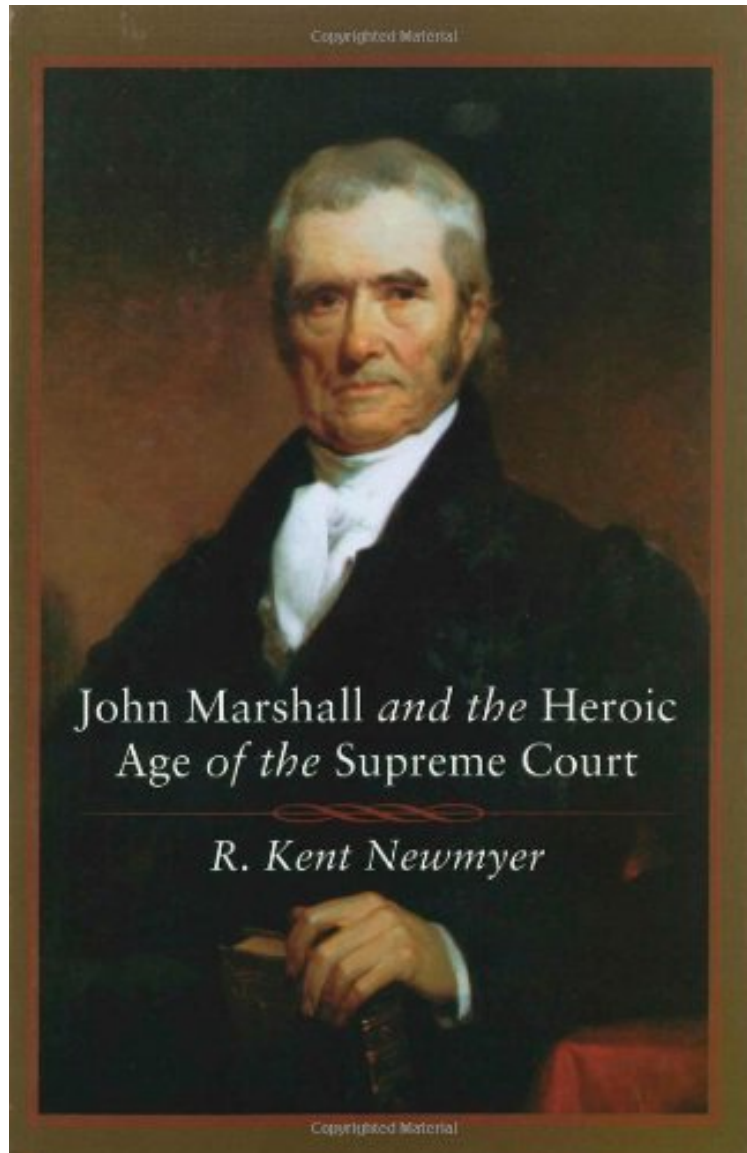


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John Marshall and the Heroic Age of the Supreme Court (Southern Biography Series)

R. Kent Newmyer

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R. Kent Newmyer : John Marshall and the Heroic Age of the Supreme Court (Southern Biography Series) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised John Marshall and the Heroic Age of the Supreme Court (Southern Biography Series):

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Donald Abramson
Excellent but lengthy historical review of the defining of the Supreme Court in relation to the political and economic development in the early 1800's. Marshall as Chief Justice led a divided court similar today. 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Thorough Analysis
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Interesting, thoroughly documented, balanced study of a key character in the evolution of American law. Recommended reading for any student of constitutional law--particularly federal judges!
23 of 27 people found the following review helpful. A great Marshall biography is yet to be written
By Michael Heath
Maybe I'm getting spoiled with the recent output of historical profiles that have the narrative quality of great fiction, like Caro's LBJ series, Chernow on Hamilton, and McCullough's books on our founding. Given that high bar, Newmyer's history of Marshall is a very difficult read. This book plods along. When discussing a principle the court dealt with Newmyer often makes it impossible to keep track of what year or even decade he's referring to, making it difficult to put the principles discussed into the proper context, especially political context. I also felt the book was very biased, glorifying his conservative nationalism without really defining why his brand of nationalism should be considered conservative rather than liberal or even non-ideological. This book would prove helpful in a Constitutional Law class discussing certain principles and their historical development, especially the rise of Corporations, but only with the guidance of a Professor who knows the era and Marshall's court well and only in small doses. I'm a sucker for books about our founding ideals and the history of our framers, but this was torture and with no obligation to finish this book, I finally gave up about the way through, which I rarely do.

John Marshall (1755--1835) was arguably the most important judicial figure in American history. As the fourth chief justice of the United States Supreme Court, serving from 1801 to 1835, he helped move the Court from the fringes of power to the epicenter of constitutional government. His great opinions in cases like *Marbury v. Madison* and *McCulloch v. Maryland* are still part of the working discourse of constitutional law in America. Drawing on a new and definitive edition of Marshall's papers, R. Kent Newmyer combines engaging narrative with new historiographical insights in a fresh interpretation of John Marshall's life in the law. More than the summation of Marshall's legal and institutional accomplishments, Newmyer's impressive study captures the nuanced texture of the justice's reasoning, the complexity of his mature jurisprudence, and the affinities and tensions between his system of law and the transformative age in which he lived. It substantiates Oliver Wendell Holmes Jr.'s view of Marshall as the most representative figure in American law.

From Publishers Weekly
In this comprehensive scholarly study of the chief justice of the U.S. Supreme Court from 1801 to 1835, Newmyer (Supreme Court Justice Joseph Story) succeeds at "locat[ing] Marshall and his jurisprudence in the broader historical context." Newmyer, a professor at the University of Connecticut School of Law, cites three principal sources for Marshall's constitutional thinking: his experience as a Revolutionary soldier, his law career steeped in the common law tradition, and his upbringing among the landowning elite in Virginia. These formative influences, Newmyer contends, created in the fourth chief justice a belief system centered on the primacy of the federal union and respect for property rights. As a judge, Marshall (1755-1835) believed in but did not always practice nonpolitical interpretation of the Constitution. Newmyer profiles a dozen of the justice's foundational opinions for the Supreme Court, demonstrating Marshall's persistent nationalist vision in which a written Constitution trumps divisive state and local interests. At the end of his career, Marshall believed his vision had been swept aside by history; and so it had, as states' rights gained ascendancy in the years leading up to the Civil War. However, his decisions are still cited as precedents today and have had a formidable impact on key legislation such as New Deal welfare programs. In this sustained and thoughtful examination, Newmyer concentrates on his subject's ideas more than his personality or his life's chronology. The author plainly approves of Marshall as a man, a thinker and a judge, and this account will persuade readers that the judge is indeed worthy of study and admiration. 276 pp., illus. Copyright 2001 Cahners Business Information, Inc.
From Library Journal
A legal and historical scholar with particular expertise in assessing the impact of U.S. Supreme Court heavyweights, Newmyer here offers fresh insight into the life, times, contributions, and significance of the Court's fourth chief justice. Focusing on Marshall's judicial career, he plunges into his early days as a novice lawyer and member of the Virginia legislature who was rapidly transformed by the Revolution into a frontier republican. Subsequently, he would step forth upon the national stage as a champion of the new order envisioned by the Constitutional Convention of 1787. The author points with consistency to Marshall's application of the rule of law in translating political confrontation and to his application of common-law rules and remedies in rectifying disputes. Chief Justice Marshall left an enduring legacy upon the Supreme Court by revealing a willingness to make political calculations a part of the decision-making process while nonetheless adhering to the rule of law in its pronouncements. In this context, notes the author, the lasting power of the Court became manifest as a result of Marshall's unique style of leadership. Highly recommended for academic and public libraries. Philip Y. Blue, New York State Supreme Court, Criminal Branch Law Lib., First Judicial District, New York Copyright 2001 Reed Business Information, Inc.
About the Author
R. Kent Newmyer, professor of law and history at the University of Connecticut School of Law, is the author of *Supreme Court Justice Joseph Story*, among other books. R. Kent Newmyer, professor of law and history at

the University of Connecticut School of Law, is the author of Supreme Court Justice Joseph Story among other books.