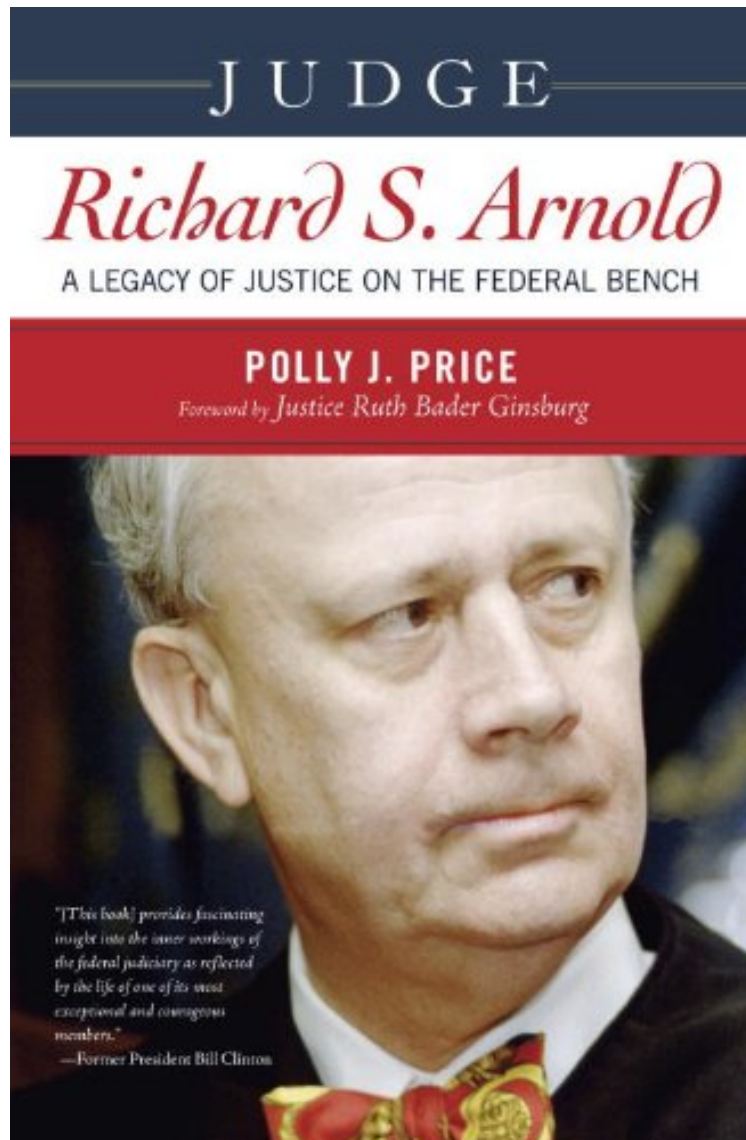


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Judge Richard S. Arnold: A Legacy of Justice on the Federal Bench

Polly J. Price

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JUDGE RICHARD S. ARNOLD: A LEGACY OF JUSTICE ON THE FEDERAL BENCH provides a fine biography of the legacy and achievements of a justice who had the respect of a wide circuit of Supreme Court Justices who attested to his fairness, judicial restraint, and influential opinions. JUDGE RICHARD S. ARNOLD comes from a law professor who had served as his law clerk, so it offers both a personal and researched survey of his life and times in a fine coverage especially recommended for college-level legal and political science libraries.

In 1994, President Bill Clinton called federal appellate court Judge and fellow Arkansan Richard Sheppard Arnold "the most brilliant man on the federal bench." But for concerns about Arnolds poor health, Clinton would have nominated him to fill the vacancy on the Supreme Court left by the retirement of Justice Harry A. Blackmun. Indeed, when the Blackmun position on the court opened up, Arnold received the endorsement of more than 100 federal judges almost 20 percent of the entire federal judiciary. Clintons concerns turned out to be well founded, for ten years later Judge Arnold succumbed to the lymphoma that he had battled for almost three decades. At his death, eight Supreme Court Justices published tributes to his fairness, judicial restraint, and eloquent and influential judicial opinions. Who was Richard Arnold, and why did so many colleagues across the political spectrum hold him in such high esteem? In this carefully researched, insightful biography, law professor Polly J. Price, who served as Judge Arnolds law clerk, has created a compelling portrait of a man who, like Judge Learned Hand of an earlier era, is widely believed to be one of the best judges never to serve on the Supreme Court. Through internal court documents, interviews with judges and law clerks, and Arnolds diaries, Professor Price traces Arnolds life, career, and political transformation from an elite Southerner with deep misgivings about *Brown v. Board of Education* to a modern champion of civil rights. Her analysis of Arnolds leadership in civil rights, especially on First Amendment issues, the death penalty, and claims of individuals against government wrongdoing, tells us much about changes in both southern and national society during his tenure from 1978 to 2004. An important example of Arnolds many contributions was his progressive resolution of desegregation in Little Rock, Arkansas, long infamous for the Central High School crisis of the 1950s. Arnolds work brought closer to an end more than fifty years of federal court supervision of the Little Rock schools. This book also features excerpts from Arnolds diary of his clerkship with Supreme Court Justice William Brennan in 1960. Arnolds diary provides unique insight into this pivotal year of the Warren Court. As much a history of federal courts in recent decades as it is the life story of one of its best-known judges, this first biography of Judge Richard S. Arnold is a sensitively written, objective account of a man of outstanding intelligence, talent, and integrity.

"Polly J. Price offers an intimate look into the brilliant legal mind of Judge Richard S. Arnold. A key witness to, and strong supporter of, the civil rights movement, Judge Arnold sat on the bench during a tumultuous time in our nation's history. Price carefully examines Arnold's personal papers to reveal his motives, deliberations, and integrity in the face of great moral debate.... [This book] provides fascinating insight into the inner workings of the federal judiciary as reflected by the life of one of its most exceptional and courageous members" --Former President Bill Clinton
About the Author
Polly J. Price (Atlanta, GA) is professor of law and associate dean of faculty at Emory University School of Law. She is also an associate faculty member of the department of history at Emory and the author of *Property Rights: Rights and Liberties under the Law*. A graduate of Harvard Law School, Prof. Price served as a law clerk for Richard S. Arnold in the Eighth US Circuit Court of Appeals from 1989 to 1991.