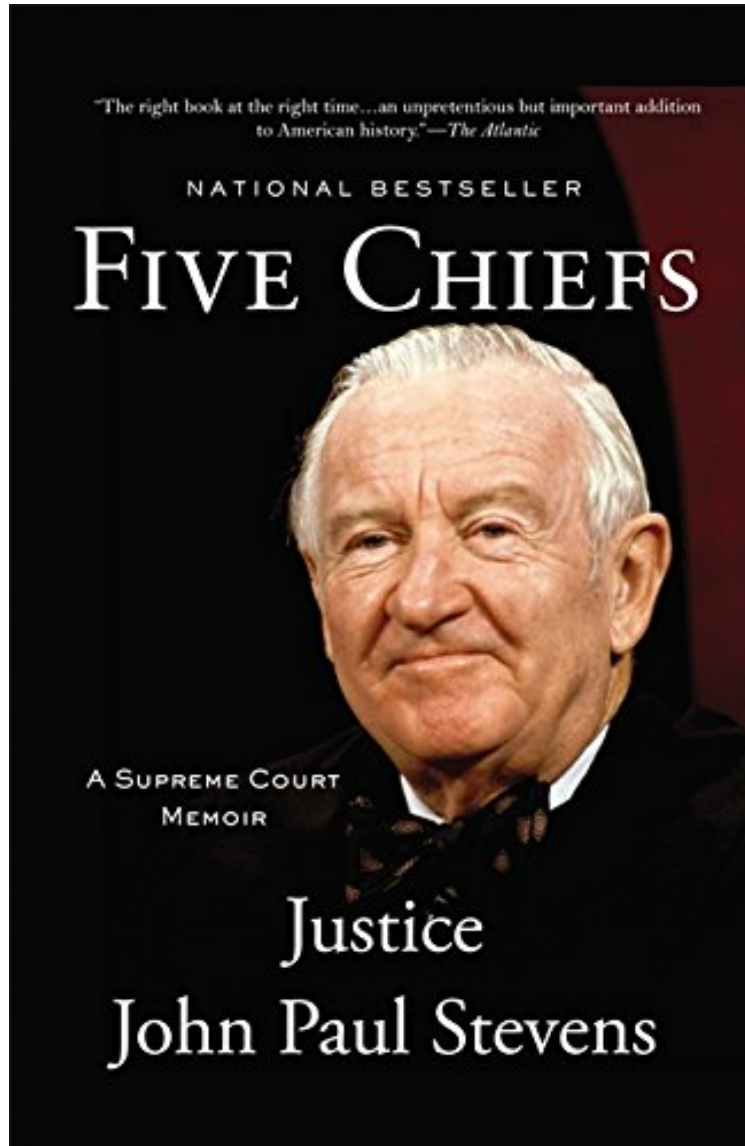


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Five Chiefs: A Supreme Court Memoir

John Paul Stevens

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John Paul Stevens : Five Chiefs: A Supreme Court Memoir before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Five Chiefs: A Supreme Court Memoir:

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. A Unique MemoirBy TomonCapeCodFormer Justice Stevens' slim volume offers insights into the processes and personalities that have dominated the Supreme Courtduring his long professional life. This is not a dry history, but rather a unique, lively personal memoir full of anecdote and opinion.John Paul Stevens is the third-longest serving Associate Justice in the court's history. Prior to that he was a

distinguished attorney and jurist. He knew just about everyone of legal significance since WW II and is willing, even eager, to share his opinions of them. His ability "to disagree without being disagreeable," put fidelity to the law above personal opinion and construct sound, logical arguments are also the qualities that he values most in his colleagues. Hence, his admiration for Justices that span the philosophical spectrum from Thurgood Marshall to Antonin Scalia. Justices Byron White and Potter Stewart are frequently praised, and Justice Clarence Thomas is given short shrift due to the rather quirky basis for his interpretation of legal precedent. Most of all, this is about the five Chief Justices from Vinson through Stevens, and how for good and ill each affected the court and its working. He is evenhanded in his application of both praise and blame. Also of great interest and value is his very brief synopsis of all the Chiefs who had gone before. A solid and at times profound legal scholar, as well as a gifted amateur historian, Mr. Stevens is particularly qualified to perform this task. Mr. Justice Stevens rights with the lucidity and attention to detail that characterized his legal opinions. This book is an enjoyable journey, where something as seemingly banal as the placement of a table can turn out to effect the running of the court. 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Fond memories of five Chief Justices By Peter This is not an auto-biography, there is too little information on Justice Stevens in it. This book is his recollections on the five Chief Justices that he worked beside. The first part of the book is on the Chief Justices that preceded his tenure on the Court then there is a chapter devoted to each of Chief Justices Vinson, Warren, Burger, Rehnquist and Roberts. I must admit that some of the book was overly technical and I skimmed through that but other areas are quite good. The interesting aspect of Justice Steven's book is what he doesn't talk about eg the Florida voting decision in 2000 that changed the Presidency of the United States. Justice Stevens does appear to hold back at times and I hope that one day he will write a true memoirs of his life. 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Book provides a glimpse of life inside the court By Jean Stevens offers some engaging insight about each of the five Chief Justices he worked with, Fred Vinson, Earl Warren, Warren Burger, William Rehnquist, and John Roberts. He discussed the times, judicial approaches, opinions, respective roles on the court, administration abilities, leadership, personal and professional challenges and their relationship with colleagues. He also talks about the court as an institution. The book is a series of anecdotes, observation and musings that is enlighten and informative. Stevens made a point of explaining the strong points as well as the weakness and follies of each Chief. The beginning of the book starts with his clerkship to Justice Wiley Rutledge in 1947 under the Vinson court. When he was a clerk he tells watching Thurgood Marshall arguing, an equal protection case, before the Supreme Court and how impressed he was with Marshalls skill. This book provides us with a glimpse of life inside the court. I read this as an e-book via my Kindle app on my Ipad.

When he resigned in June 2010, Justice John Paul Stevens was the third-longest-serving Supreme Court justice in American history. As a lawyer and on the court, he worked with five chief justices: as a law clerk during Fred Vinson's tenure, a practicing lawyer when Earl Warren was chief, a circuit judge and junior justice during Warren Burger's term, a contemporary colleague of William Rehnquist, and a colleague of current Chief Justice John Roberts. *FIVE CHIEFS* is his personal account of the workings of the court from his personal experiences with these men, and the controversial cases they deliberated over, from freedom of speech and affirmative action to capital punishment and sovereign immunity. Written with humility and grace, and packed with interesting anecdotes, *FIVE CHIEFS* is an unprecedented and historically significant look at the highest court in the United States.

"Five Chiefs is a 248-page bow-tie; like its dignified author, and his famous sartorial flourish, an unpretentious but important addition to American history...At its core, the book is not just another memoir from yet another judge. It marks instead the end of an era on the Supreme Court and in the broader swath of American law and politics...Stevens' focused eye gives way to a hundred or so smaller points, some densely legal, some historical, some even funny...Five Chiefs is the right book at the right time. It's a brief and largely defanged reminder of some of what we have lost in public life with the demise of the "moderate Republican" on Capitol Hill and the "practical conservative" on the federal bench...A fine new book." Andrew Cohen, *The Atlantic* "An informative and very appealing new memoir of life on the Supreme Court...Justice Stevens not only shows extraordinary respect for the Court as an institution, but does the same for his former colleagues-even ones with whom he often disagreed...[It's] classic Justice Stevens: understated and generous to those he differs with, but absolutely clear on where he believes justice lies." Adam Cohen, *Time* "A gentle memoir by a decent and accomplished public servant. Stevens opts not for jabs or evening scores but rather for reminiscences...Laced with observations on the court's architecture, traditions and even its seating arrangements, it is the collected ruminations of a man who has served his country in war and peace, across the decades... His memoir is as gracious as its author and a reminder that Stevens is more than a longtime member of the nation's highest court. He is a national treasure." Jim Newton, *Los Angeles Times* About the Author John Paul Stevens served as a Judge of the United States Court of Appeals for the Seventh Circuit from 1970-1975. President Ford nominated him as an Associate Justice of the Supreme Court, and he took his seat December 19, 1975. Justice Stevens retired from the Supreme Court on June 29, 2010.