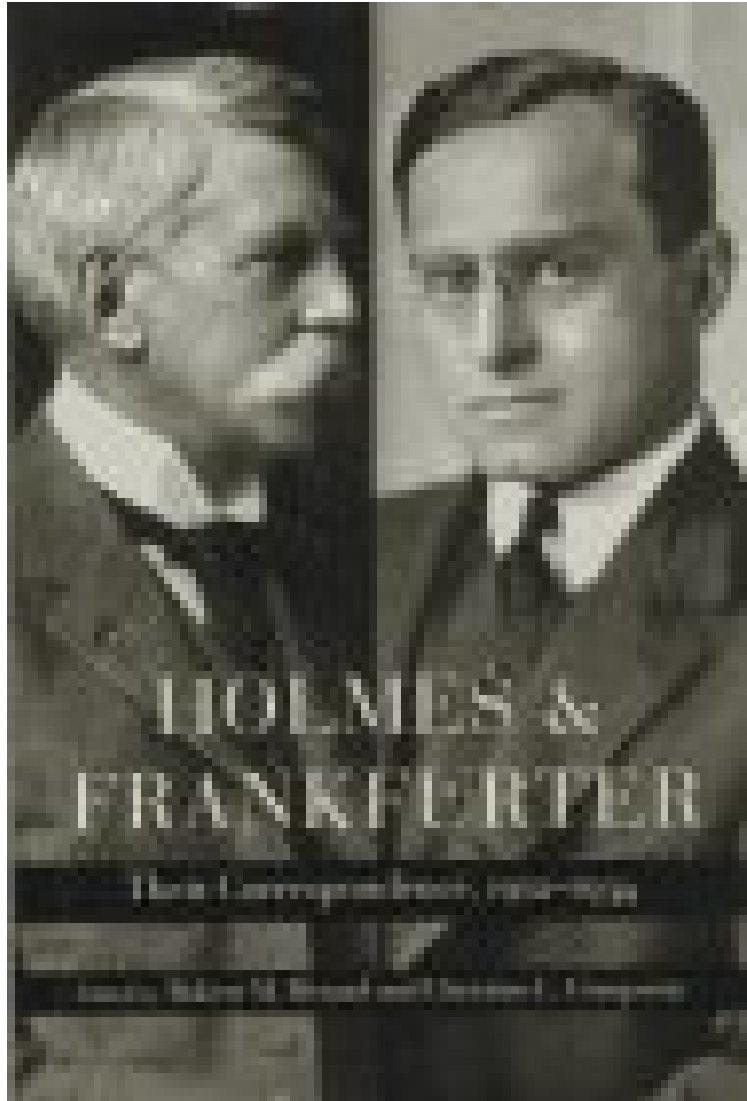


(Download) Holmes and Frankfurter: Their Correspondence, 1912-1934

Holmes and Frankfurter: Their Correspondence, 1912-1934

Oliver Wendell Holmes, Felix Frankfurter
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Oliver Wendell Holmes, Felix Frankfurter : Holmes and Frankfurter: Their Correspondence, 1912-1934 before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Holmes and Frankfurter: Their Correspondence, 1912-1934:

9 of 9 people found the following review helpful. Simply a superb collection of correspondenceBy Ronald H. ClarkThis book is comprised of 373 letters [243 by Holmes; 130 by Frankfurter] exchanged between 1912 and 1934. This is an extremely significant period in the lives of the two correspondents, and the letters are highly interesting. The editors have written an invaluable introduction of some 22 pages discussing the letters, their authors, the many efforts

to develop a OWH biography, and the migration of Holmes' papers after his death. The letters themselves cover a variety of topics: the judicial role; socialism; the philosophy of judging; legal history; and of course discussion of some very important cases. A number of individuals are mentioned; these comments are among the most revealing insights into the authors. Among others, OWH and FF tackle Charles Beard, Laski, Brandeis, Learned Hand, Pollock, Wigmore, Keynes, John Zane, Hohfeld, W.W. Buckland, Cardozo, Roscoe Pound, Lord Bryce, and various Supreme Court Justices. Holmes' talent for the pithy expression is well in evidence. For example, he refers to the Clayton Act as "legislative humbug. And of course, Holmes being Holmes, there is discussion of many important books and ideas he was encountering. Interestingly, the editors also believe it likely [as do Urofsky and Levy in their edited collection of Brandeis/FF letters also reviewed on] that FF destroyed a number of his letters to Holmes after the Justice's death. OWH himself had suggested that FF destroy Holmes' letters during the correspondence. Fortunately, for all of us, this is one instruction FF did not (at least) fully execute. As always, Holmes demonstrates flair, humor, insight, and great knowledge in his letters--he is one of our finest contributors of important letters. This 278 page book has a helpful bibliography, and has been nicely printed by University Press of New England. A book of lasting importance beyond question.

Nearly 400 previously unpublished letters capture the essence of an extraordinary and in some ways unlikely friendship between one of America's preeminent jurists and a younger, reform-minded colleague who would himself one day ascend to the Supreme Court. Oliver Wendell Holmes was 71 when introduced to fiery, effervescent Felix Frankfurter, who'd come to Washington at age 30 to serve President Taft. The two couldn't have had more different backgrounds: Holmes a Civil War hero of Boston Brahmin stock, and Frankfurter a Jewish immigrant whose reformist views would lead him to help found the American Civil Liberties Union and act as key advisor to Franklin Roosevelt and his New Deal. With an introduction providing historical background and annotations that supply context for cases mentioned, this unique collection illuminates a strong and mutually satisfying personal and professional relationship between two men whose exchanges on the meaning of law in general and American law in particular, the editors write, "found expression in their work and influenced legal and political change in their own lifetimes and in ours as well."

.com The place of Oliver Wendell Holmes in American legal history has long been assured. Few Supreme Court justices have approached the position occupied by Holmes, his decisions and dissents even passing (albeit often inaccurately) into common discourse: "you can't yell fire in a theatre." His legal decisions and dissents possess a literary tone that sets them apart from other jurists: "Every idea is an incitement.... Eloquence may set fire to reason." (Gitlow v. N. Y.) It should be no surprise then to find Holmes's letters to Felix Frankfurter a pleasure to read. The editors' introduction, annotations, and references make the correspondence of these two great minds accessible to readers and browsers of all sorts. From Library Journal Oliver Wendell Holmes has been included on almost every list of the "great" U.S. Supreme Court justices. A Civil War hero with a prominent New England lineage, a noted writer in law and literature, and best known as "The Great Dissenter," Holmes can be credited with defining much of the outline of modern American constitutional law. Felix Frankfurter, while recognized for the brilliance of his legal scholarship, was often considered to be a divisive force on the Court. Yet these two had a long and wonderful friendship that is apparent in this compilation of their correspondence during the years up to 1934, the year before Holmes's death. Some of the correspondence is pedestrian, e.g., an appreciation of a book recommended for vacation reading. Other letters, however, provide real insight into the pressing constitutional and political issues of the day. Mennel (history, Univ. of New Hampshire) and Compston (past director of the National History Education Network) have provided scholars with source material that helps in interpreting the work of the Supreme Court during the first third of this century. The general reader may find that *The Essential Holmes* (LJ 3/15/92) gives the life and influence of Oliver Wendell Holmes great breadth. Jerry E. Stephens, U.S. Court of Appeals Lib., Oklahoma City Copyright 1996 Reed Business Information, Inc. From Kirkus s This edifying collection of letters between two titans of American legal thought will be a welcome addition to the library of any student of legal theory, legal history, or the Supreme Court. Editors Mennel (History/Univ. of New Hampshire) and Compston (former director of the National History Education Network) have compiled and annotated the personal correspondence of two of America's preeminent legal minds, Oliver Wendell Holmes and Felix Frankfurter. When they first met and began corresponding, Holmes, though in his 70s, was at the height of his formidable powers--a sitting Supreme Court justice and the author of leading texts on American law. Frankfurter was a highly respected attorney and an ebullient and brilliant young professor at Harvard Law School. In Holmes, Frankfurter found a mentor and sponsor worthy of deification. "For you to call my work 'really A1,' " Frankfurter wrote to Holmes, "is to be knighted by the King!" In Frankfurter, Holmes found a doting pupil whose exhilaration and youth rejuvenated the aging and cynical justice: "Even your more optimistic outlook and prophecy for human destinies than I can venture upon makes you dearer to me." Spanning the period from 1912 through 1934, their never-before-published letters present in a terse microcosm not only the heart of American legal theory, but indeed the core of early-20th-century American intellectual development. They do not contain lengthy exegeses of jurisprudence but lively snippets of philosophy along with politics and gossip. The editors open the

collection with a useful but, for the uninitiated, too brief introduction to the philosophies and history of Holmes and Frankfurter. They have, however, supplied rich annotations regarding the individuals, legal cases, books, and events alluded to by the two men. This, then, is a most useful addition to the existing biographies and commentaries regarding Holmes, Frankfurter, and their contemporaries. -- Copyright 1996, Kirkus Associates, LP. All rights reserved.