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The Law of the Commonwealth and Chief Justice Shaw

Leonard W. Levy

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Leonard W. Levy : The Law of the Commonwealth and Chief Justice Shaw before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Law of the Commonwealth and Chief Justice Shaw:

During his thirty years as Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Massachusetts, from 1830 to 1860, Lemuel Shaw wrote approximately 2,200 opinions, probably setting a record. His writings covered the entire domain of jurisprudence, excepting admiralty, and no other state judge through his opinions alone had so great an influence on the course of American law. Through a critical study of Shaw's opinions, noted historian Leonard Levy reveals what Shaw's generation thought about the relation of the individual to the state, and of states to the nation, and how his peers perceived rights, duties, and liabilities, the roles of government, and the character of law itself. Each chapter stands as a selected aspect of American legal history--some cover the response of the law to a great social issue such as fugitive slavery or trade unionism, others attempt to show how and why changes in American industrial life necessitated accommodations in the law, and still others are concerned with the growth of legal doctrines of great consequence such as police power. Overall, the opinions of Justice Shaw illuminate how liberty and order were comparatively valued, which interests were deemed important enough to secure in legal moorings, and where the points of social tension, growth, and power were rooted.

"The author proceeds to unfold a remarkably deep knowledge of those parts of the law with which he is dealing. The book is in many ways a model of legal biography....This book is warmly recommended to all students of American constitutional and legal history."--The Modern Law "Portrays brilliantly the way in which the Shaw Court worked creatively and with sweeping impact on American law and the economy."--Harry N. Scheiber, University of California, Berkeley School of Law"Levy's book is one of the best written and most provocative works in American legal history, and should be read by everyone seriously interested in the field."--S. B. Presser and J. S. Zainaldin, Law and American History"The best judicial biography of Shaw."--Paul Sinkelman, State University of New York, Binghamton

From the Back Cover
This book in many ways is a model of legal biography, with a sweeping impact on American law and the economy.
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