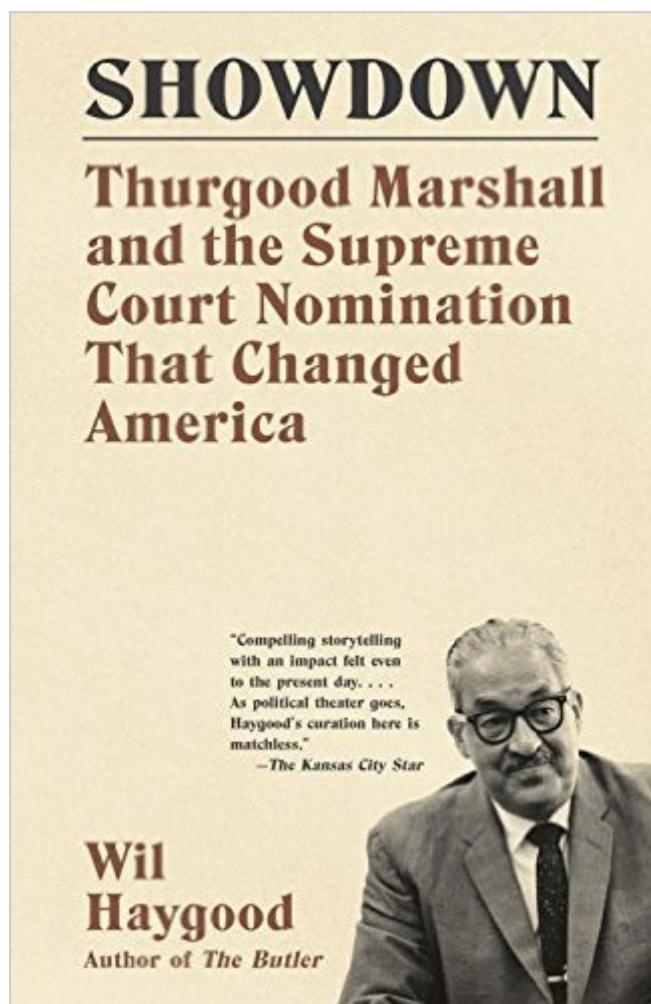


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Showdown: Thurgood Marshall And The Supreme Court Nomination That Changed America



Synopsis

Over the course of his forty-year career, Thurgood Marshall brought down the separate-but-equal doctrine, integrated schools, and not only fought for human rights and human dignity but also made them impossible to deny in the courts and in the streets. In this galvanizing biography, award-winning author Wil Haygood uses the framework of the dramatic, contentious five-day Senate hearing to confirm Marshall as the first African-American Supreme Court justice, to weave a provocative and moving look at Marshall's life as well as at the politicians, lawyers, activists, and others who shaped or desperately tried to stop the civil rights movement. An authoritative account of one of the most transformative justices of the twentieth century, Showdown makes clear that it is impossible to overestimate Thurgood Marshall's lasting influence on the racial politics of our nation.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

This is an epic story of the '60s, and I think it's fair to say Thurgood Marshall's story is underrepresented in most of the accounts of the Civil Rights struggle of that time. As a history, this is the definition of what a five-star book is - it's compellingly written, packs an emotional punch, is even-handed and not a polemic, even when the figures deserve harsh criticism, and is relevant to today. And, it focuses attention on a towering moral figure from our past, who is undeservedly a little forgotten. Or if he's not forgotten, he's too much a "Mandela-like" historical figure of so much stature that he's lost his place with the 'common man.' This re-humanizes someone who fought past

obstacles at every turn. For all of Lyndon Johnson's many flaws, he was single-minded. While he no doubt used racial invective, I don't think he was a racist of any sort. I think he cared about the underdog above anything else, and saw in the "Negro" population of the time an underdog he was simply not going to let down. Nobody made Johnson pick the Civil Rights battles he fought - he chose them all, against every bit of political common sense, but left us with a better country...despite how revisionists want to find fault and blame. Marshall stood against the most powerful US Senate in the last 100 years. These were entrenched figures of the most entrenched bigotry - Eastland, Ervin, McClellan, and they had ALL the power. Think of these guys in that era, before any technology or real oversight. They could control everything - and much of their focus was on keeping black people down. They're villains - maybe they meant well in their time, and could die thinking they lived the right way. They didn't.

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