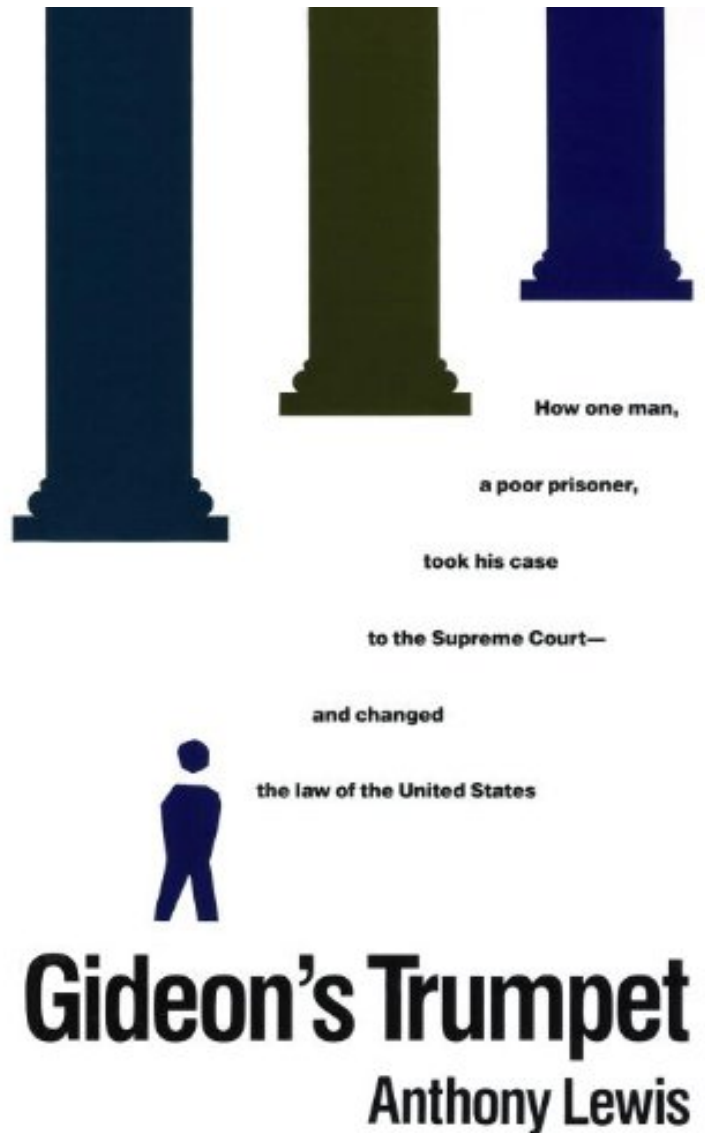


Gideon's Trumpet

Von Anthony Lewis

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Von Anthony Lewis : Gideon's Trumpet before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Gideon's Trumpet:

KundenrezensionenHilfreichste Kundenrezensionen1 von 1 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich. A story of justice and the function of the Supreme Court.Von Ein KundeWhat is this institution that is called the Supreme Court of the United States? Does it make law? Does it influence society? How do they come to a decision? Are their decisions final? How do they decide to review a case? Who represents the government? Who represents the client who

brings the case to the court for review? All these questions and more are answered in the *Gideon's Trumpet*. The book brings to the reader an appreciation that although our society includes some laws that are flawed, the Supreme Court stands as a safety valve, relieving those intolerable social pressures that build up when legislatures are unresponsive to the urgent needs of society. Racial tensions in our society may not be as explosive as they were in the 1960's, but they are still evident. Can you imagine if the Supreme Court had failed to take the stand they did against Congress, and many Southern legislatures on the complex issues it has faced over the last 50 years? I cannot imagine the court failing us on such complex issues as the right to vote, to serve on juries, to use public facilities, and to obtain adequate integrated education. But if it had, I am afraid racial tensions today would be much more precarious than what they appear to be. *Gideon's Trumpet* contrasts the Supreme Court, and the functions of the legislatures. An important difference between the Supreme Court and legislatures is that the Supreme Court deals with individuals, and legislatures deal with large abstractions. A legislature may find it desirable to pass a statute to deport aliens who once belonged to an infamous group, such as the Communist party, but when the law is applied to a senior citizen who came to this country when he was six months old and during his youth briefly joined the party, the moral considerations seem very different. The Supreme Court can then look into the constitutionality of the law as applied to the individual. If the Supreme Court finds the application of the law unconstitutional on the individual, in essence it passes a law describing bad law. *Gideon's Trumpet* also gives the reader an insight into the identities of two counsels who argued the case before the Supreme Court and what they thought about the challenge. Both counsels came from different backgrounds and levels of experience. Abe Fortas, who represented Gideon was over 50 years old when he accepted the case. He recognized that the current of legal history was moving with him. Most importantly he was not overly confident, and recognized that the issue Gideon was bringing before the court was a constitutional case of fundamental importance that would affect relationships between the federal and state governments. Because of this he knew that for the good of the country he had to get unanimity in the court, although he believed his chances were slim to get nine justices to agree with him. A footnote on Fortas. In 1965 he was appointed to the Supreme Court by President Johnson and later was nominated to the Chief Justice. He resigned the Court in 1969. On the other side, defending to keep Gideon in jail was a much younger and inexperienced lawyer, an Assistant Attorney General, Bruce Robert Jacob, from the state of Florida. Unlike Fortas, he did not have a power law firm for research and support, and was left on his own to develop and make arguments. He knew he had a weak argument for the times, but wanted to do the best under the circumstances. It troubled him that the case was supposedly very important to the states and he did not want to be blamed for losing the case. He turned to the states for assistance and asked them to provide briefs to the court. However, their support was tepid and not really helpful. In summary, *Gideon's Trumpet* chronicles the story of a poor, uneducated man who was heard by the Court. Unaided by the bar he wrote the Supreme Court asking that his case be heard. He succeeded because the Court itself was struggling with the issue he declared, and it was searching for the right case to overturn a bad decision they had made twenty or so years earlier. For his individual plight, Gideon could not have asked for better timing. The book describes that fairness in justice ultimately prevails, and it affirms that something things in life occur because of the right timing. rdl 7/4/991 von 1 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich. The Road to the Supreme Court Von Nick Gideon's Trumpet is a marvelous true story of how a poor man new in his heart his rights guaranteed by the United States Constitution and fought for those rights, by himself from prison. It recounts the incredible events surrounding the landmark Supreme Court case of *Gideon v. Wainwright*. While beautifully describing the uphill battle that Clarence Earl Gideon faced, the author enlightens the viewer with the essential roles of the different branches of government and of the basic but crucial processes that they endure. A great book for anyone who has had any interest in the law or government. A must for law students. 0 von 0 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich. The true story of a man fighting for his right Von P. Mann Clarence Earl Gideon would have been less than an historical footnote had he not written to the U.S. Supreme Court asking for, in essence, a "get out of jail free" card. Gideon, who would be a career criminal by contemporary definitions, was in a Florida jail for breaking and entering with intent to commit a misdemeanor. In his letter to the nation's highest court, Gideon wrote in pencil that his constitutional rights were violated when he was denied the right to have an attorney at his trial. In the end, the Supreme Court agreed with Gideon and reversed a prior decision to hold that people in Gideon's position (but not all accused persons) are entitled to the assistance of a lawyer and to have the state pay for one if necessary. "*Gideon's Trumpet*" tells the story of one man's improbable battle and the Court's ultimate decision in his favor. Author Anthony Lewis has done a remarkable job of putting a human face (several, actually) on one of the landmark cases in criminal procedure and in making the story accessible to any adult regardless of a lack of formal legal training. In "*Gideon's Trumpet*," Lewis presents all of the characters as humans, not simply as people whose names later stand for legal rules (a la *Miranda*). "*Gideon's Trumpet*" also represents a ray of hope for those who think the legal system is solely the prerogative of the wealthy and politically connected, for here is the story of a virtual nobody who without the help of an attorney undertook a monumental process. In fact, "*Gideon's Trumpet*" might be a bit too optimistic. Written in 1964, the book could not have foreseen the subsequent studies that have shown that **Gideon v. Wainwright** (the name of the case) has not substantially altered conviction rates. Still, the book tells a

remarkable story quite well. Perhaps the highest praise is that this true story reads as a novel.

KurzbeschreibungA history of the landmark case of James Earl Gideon's fight for the right to legal counsel. Notes, table of cases, index. The classic backlist bestseller. More than 800,000 sold since its first pub date of 1964.
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