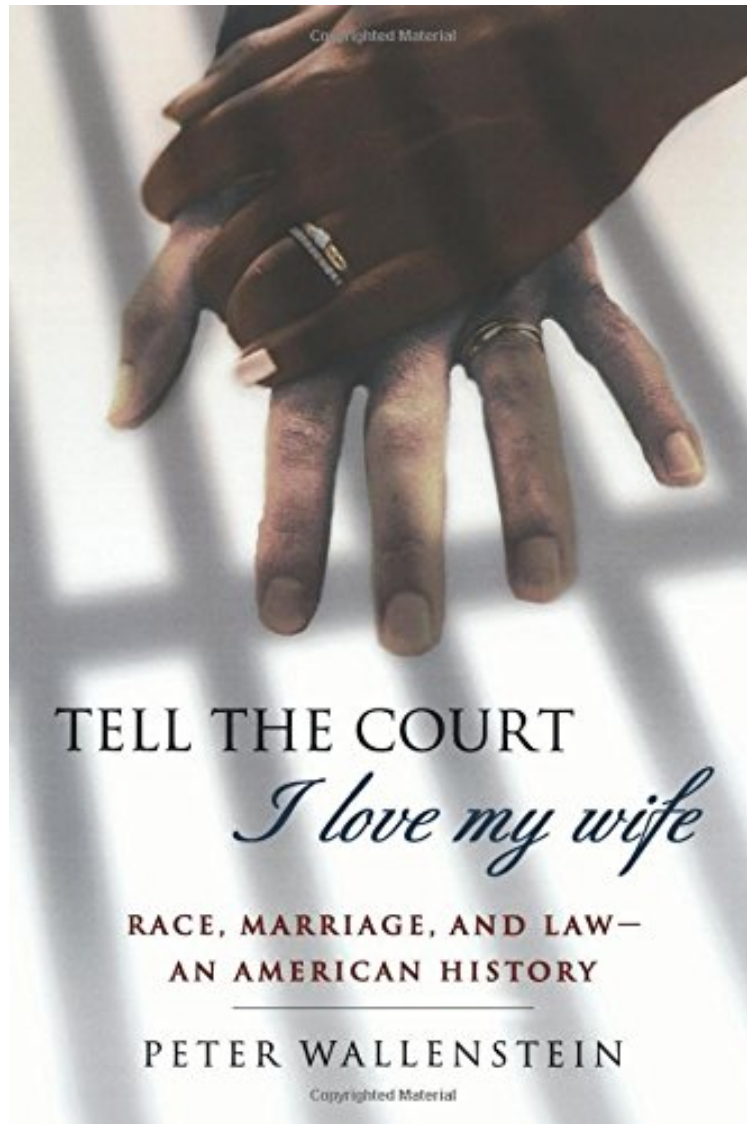


(Download) Tell the Court I Love My Wife: Race, Marriage, and Law--An American History

Tell the Court I Love My Wife: Race, Marriage, and Law--An American History

Peter Wallenstein

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Peter Wallenstein : Tell the Court I Love My Wife: Race, Marriage, and Law--An American History before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Tell the Court I Love My Wife: Race, Marriage, and Law--An American History:

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0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Misleading TitleBy El GringoThe title is Richard Loving's famous and heartbreaking instructions to his lawyers before his case was heard before the Supreme Court. It is one of the very few times that the voice of a spouse in an interracial marriage, or that of neighbors, law enforcement officers, newspaper writers, clergy, scholars, or legislators is heard in this book.I don't say this to criticize the author. The book is what it is: a thorough and impressive record via court cases of the rise and fall of what Wallenstein calls the antimiscegenation regime in the United States. The book does provide moving glimpses of the lives of the couples oppressed by the laws banning interracial marriage, but most of its 250 plus pages are devoted to the utterances of judges. And since law involving race is inevitably surrounded by bigotry, tortured logic, pseudo-science, hatred, and stupidity, the court opinions make educational but not edifying reading.Although the lay reader will not be tripped up by the terminology or style of legal briefs, it is nevertheless a hard slog to read.

The first in-depth history of miscegenation law in the United States, this book illustrates in vivid detail how states, communities, and the courts have defined and regulated mixed-race marriage from the colonial period to the present. Combining a storyteller's detail with a historian's analysis, Peter Wallenstein brings the sagas of Richard and Mildred Loving and countless other interracial couples before them to light in this harrowing history of how individual states had the power to regulate one of the most private aspects of life: marriage.

From BooklistWallenstein uses the 1967 Loving case, in which a Virginia couple challenged laws against interracial marriage, as a pivot point for examining racial definitions and relations in the U.S. By its ruling, the U.S. Supreme Court finally outlawed so-called antimiscegenation laws and amended the patchwork of laws stating who was black or white and what constituted interracial marriage. Wallenstein compellingly traces the legal intersection between race and sex from the pre-Civil War focus on liaisons between black men and white women to later concerns about the inheritance implications of white former masters acknowledging their children born of slave women. He also examines the social intricacies affecting the evolution of the legal meaning of black. Because laws varied from state to state--and even within a state--couples such as the Lovings found themselves living in a legal limbo. But Wallenstein also appropriately explores the changes in social attitudes that saw racial definitions move from fluid to rigid and to the current state of increasing racial and ethnic diversity that defies easy definition. Vernon FordCopyright American Library Association. All rights reserved For he has unearthed many true stories that make the reader's heart ache for the sufferings of real people... Harriet P. Gross, Dallas Morning NewsWallenstein compellingly traces the legal intersection between race and sex... BooklistHis compelling analysis delivers a superb legal history of interracial marriage...filling a remarkable void in the literature... Library Journal...a comprehensive, almost encyclopedic, history of the law of interracial marriage in America... Paul Moreno, History: s of New BooksTell the Court I Love My Wife is a remarkable study by a splendid scholar who takes a fresh look at the history of miscegenation. Peter Wallenstein's impressive research and lively writing explores issues and questions of racial identity, marriage and property rights, law and power in the long sweep of American history. All Americans who believe that the right to marry someone of a different racial identity is sacrosanct need to read this spirited and thoughtful book. Darlene Clark Hine, Michigan State University and co-editor of Black Women in America: An Historical EncyclopediaAbout the AuthorPeter Wallenstein is Associate Professor of History at Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University. He is the author of From Slave South to New South and Virginia Tech, Land Grant University, 1872-1997.