



And the Walls Came Tumbling Down: Greatest Closing Arguments Protecting Civil Liberties

Michael S Lief, H. Mitchell Caldwell

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From the authors of the critically acclaimed "Ladies and Gentlemen of the Jury" comes a collection of closing arguments that spans 250 years and eight landmark trials that have redefined civil rights in America and profoundly affected our society. Every day millions of Americans enjoy the freedom to decide what they do with their property, their bodies, their speech, and their votes. However, the rights to these freedoms have not always been guaranteed. Our civil rights have been assured by cases that have produced monumental shifts in America's cultural, social, and legal landscape over the past three centuries. Until now, the closing arguments from these trials have been unavailable to the lay reader -- except in the lasting effects of the decisions that they influenced. But here the authors have collected some of the most pivotal and exciting closing arguments in history -- from the Amistad case, in which John Quincy Adams brought the injustice of slavery to the center stage of American politics, to the Susan B. Anthony decision, which paved the way to success for women's suffrage, to the Larry Flynt trial, in which the porn king became an unlikely champion for freedom of speech. One instance demonstrates how bad lawyering can make bad law -- the Carrie Buck case, in which the Supreme Court upheld the forced sterilization of women, a decision still on the books today. Each of the eight chapters presents a case in the context of American society -- then and now -- and includes a brief historical introduction, a biographical sketch of the attorney involved, an analysis of the closing argument, and a summary of the impact of the trial's conclusion on its participants and our country. In clear, jargon-free prose, Michael S Lief and H. Mitchell Caldwell make these pivotal, society-changing cases come to vibrant life for every reader -- fully revealing the trials that have helped resolve America's most complex civil issues and define our lives.

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